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Insurgency and the Martial Law

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Mutual Defence Alliances in a Changing World

Binh Dinh: the Anatomy of a Province

Civic Action: the Philippine Experience

The Role of Medicine in Counter-Subversion and Counter-Insurgency

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Contents:

Page:

SPECTRUM

Volume 1, No 2 , January 1973

Contents:

Page:

Insurgency and Martial Law in the Philippines 1
by General Romeo Cesar Espino

Mutual Defence Alliances in a Changing World 6
by Secretary-General Sunthorn Hongladarom

Binh Dinh: the Anatomy of a Province 12
by Douglas Pike

The Role of Medicine in Counter-Subversion and Counter-Insurgency 20
by Lt. Col. Ramon C. Cortes, Jr.

Civic Action: the Philippine Experience 24
by Colonel Angel M. Navarro

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SPECTRUM

Volume 1, No. 2 January 1973

Contents:

Page:

Insurgency and Martial Law in the Philippines 1
by Harriet Rosen Dare Eglen

Mutual Defense Alliance in a Changing World 4
by Stephen Gardner, Secretary Representative

Black Dawn: the Harrying of a Province 12
by Douglas Cole

The Role of Missions in Counter-Insurgency and Counter Insurgency 16
by Lt. Col. Harlan C. Carter, Jr.

Civic Action: the Philippine Experience 21
by Colonel Arthur M. Gaudio

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Insurgency and Martial Law in the Philippines

by General Romeo Cesar Espino

The author is the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippinès. In this article, he analyses the events which precipitated the recent imposition of martial law in the Philippines.

A new chapter in the life of the Republic of the Philippines has opened with the imposition of Martial Law throughout the country recently. This development has elicited much interest and concern among our allies and observers of the Philippine scene. Allow me, therefore, to apprise you of the events that culminated in this critical situation which precipitated the formulation of a deliberate and forceful decision–"in order", as in the words of President Marcos "that we may not completely lose the civil rights and freedom which we cherish".

The external challenge of an aggressive, well-organized international Communist movement and the consequent internal subversive activities under a tightly organized conspiracy to overthrow the Philippine Republic, culminating in armed insurrection and rebellion, has steadily forced the Government backward, until it was pressed against the wall, leaving it no alternative but to wield the strongest weapon of preservation as embodied in the Constitution. The primary purpose was evident–to save the Republic and to reform society.

On September 21, 1972, Philippine President Ferdinand E. Marcos signed Proclamation 1081 placing the entire country under martial law. The order for the actual implementation of the Proclamation was signed at 9:00 in the evening of the following day. Formal announcement, over nation-wide radio and television, by the President himself, did not come until 7:30 the next evening, September 23, 1972 by which time the public had already become aware of the machinery quietly being set in motion for the implementation of the various presidential orders and decrees.

Having established that such a situation at the time indeed existed, President Marcos emphasized two objectives in proclaiming martial law:

> Firstly, to eliminate the threat of a violent overthrow of the Government and thereby save the Republic, and
>
> Secondly, to bring about wide-sweeping and far-ranging reforms in the country's social, economic, and political institutions in line with the concept of bringing about a new society more responsive to the country's need and developmental requirements.

The second objective involves the removal of the inequities of the present society, the clean-up of Government of its corrupt and sterile elements, the liquidation of criminal syndicates, and the systematic development of the economy; in short, to cleanse the country of the root causes for unrest.

Concept of Martial Law

The concept of martial law "in sensu strictiore" as applied in the Philippines today, means that the military forces of the state have been called to render aid and assistance to the civil authority to exercise and discharge its functions and responsibilities with great vigour. In this sense, the President merely summoned the military forces of the state to assist him in maintaining law and order and in meeting the challenge of a national emergency; the military does not enjoy ascendancy.

Background in the Exercise of Emergency Powers

The use of emergency powers by the Government as the suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus and martial law, is not without precedent in the Philippine history. It is in fact a part of our democratic traditions and in accordance with our Constitution. In 1905, Governor-General Luke E. Wright suspended the writ of habeas corpus in the provinces of Batangas and Cavite in the face of an open revolt by organized bands against constituted authorities. President Elpidio Quirino in 1950, on the recommendation of his Secretary of National Defense Ramon Magsaysay, resorted to the same measure to cover certain provinces of Central Luzon at the height of the Huk rebellion. The escalation of lawlessness and insurgency in 1970, climaxed by the bombing at Plaza Miranda, Manila on August 21, 1971, compelled President Marcos to fall back on the exercise of his emergency powers provided in the Constitution by suspending the writ of habeas corpus. In spite of this, the internal Communist threat continued to grow and has assumed the magnitude

of an actual state of war against the Filipino people and the Republic of the Philippines. A stronger measure– that of the imposition of martial law had to be resorted to. This is an extraordinary power granted by the Constitution to the President as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces.

The Philippines had always prided itself on being a stronghold of democracy in Asia. Ever since the Filipinos assumed complete management of their own affairs upon the grant of independence in 1946, they have tried to adopt and maintain its basic principles of democratic Government. Despite the turbulence which accompanied the post-independence years, caused by grave economic and political problems, the Filipinos were able to maintain the integrity of their political institutions.

Still, with the imposition of martial law, the Philippines stands proudly in being a stronghold of democracy in Asia. Despite the heavy strains placed on the constitutional orders, the supremacy of civil authority over the military is recognized. For democracy has not perished with the imposition of martial law. Rather, it has been strengthened as envisioned by the framers of our constitution in explicitly providing the President the emergency powers in accordance with traditional and democratic processes sanctioned in the Constituion. This is paramount, if only to restore among the Filipino people faith in, and adherence to the democratic ideals, values and institutions of Government and of society basically associated with that order.

Background of Events Prior to Declaration of Martial Law

Let me therefore brief you on the background of events which compelled President Marcos to exercise such extraordinary powers.

The several months immediately preceding imposition of martial law were especially troubled ones in which the country experienced one major crisis after another. A sharp decline in foreign currency reserves and subsequent Governmental efforts to arrest it resulted in the steep rise of consumer prices, thereby reducing the purchasing power of thousands of wage-earners. To further aggravate matters, a series of natural disasters inflicted tremendous damage to property and crops raising the spectre of further spiralling costs and critical shortages in the supply of food staples and other basic commodities.

Protest demonstrations, spearheaded mainly by student and labour groups began erupting periodically, increasing in frequency and intensity, as issues indiscriminately multiplied, and passions heightened. A bitter round of transportation strikes and fuel price disputes, precipitated by external factors, also disrupted life in various parts of the country, most especially in Metropolitan Manila.

Although the student-labour movement appeared to be initially directed at bringing about specific reforms in Government, and at alleviating the growing economic misery, the clamouring became more and more revolutionary in tone and violent in expression. It soon became strongly evident that the strategies employed and issues exploited were being patterned along lines similar to those Communist "front" organizations in various parts of the world.

It might also be emphasized at this point that mass communications media, both print and broadcast, contributed in no small measure, to stirring up widespread dissatisfaction, anger and anxiety by its sensationalized treatment of news stories and commentaries. In the urban and rural areas, noticeable increases in the spread of subversive literature, written in Filipino and English, seemed to have coincided with those geographical areas in which dissident activities were known to be intensifying.

It was also at this time that the political atmosphere of the Greater Manila area became very much charged with the word "revolution" both among intellectuals and student activists, and politicians, from the President downwards. Noticeably, it seemed that in the period under review, the country had more than its usual share of political killings and violence. The climax was provided by the bomb attack on the opposition party's political rally at Plaza Miranda in August 1971, after which, the President promptly suspended the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus.

In the provinces, politics became also increasingly marked by bloody clashes between cultural minorities, and by terrorism perpetrated by private armies of political overlords. Rising incidence of criminality was particularly noted in various parts of the country, especially in the urban areas.

Intensification of insurgent activity

More alarming in terms of immediate threat to national security was the marked resurgence and progression of insurgent activity, as indicated by the widening scope and intensified level of operations. From Central Luzon, particularly the province of Tarlac, it spread to the surrounding provinces of Zambales, Bataan and Nueva Ecija. By mid-1972, the New People's Army/Communist Party of the Philippines (NPA/CPP) had expanded their territory of operations to cover Isabela in northern Luzon, Camarines Sur, Laguna and Quezon in southern Luzon, as well as some parts of the Visayas and Mindanao. The revitalization of the NPA two years earlier obviously aided the expansionist drive of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

It will be recalled that the defection of two young military officers, in December 1970 and March 1971, along with a large number of military weapons taken from the armory of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) in Baguio City, served to substantially boost the Communist movement which until that time had been flagging in spirit and in activity. However, from the time the young officers joined the Communist movement, there was a marked increase in the number of encounters,

ambuscades and raids launched by the NPA against Government troops.

At this juncture, it should be noted that until this period insurgent activity, though serious, was essentially confined to seeking psychological and not military advantage. The increase in the number of such encounters against Government troops obviously suggested that a new phase, now more aggressive and determined than ever before, was being launched.

Although the NPA suffered substantial losses in men and arms from these encounters, such losses were compensated by radical elements from Communist "front" organizations who joined the insurgent forces as regulars.

Present insurgent strength is estimated at 1,228 regulars; 10,336 support elements; and a mass base of 103,800. Of these figures, the NPA claim 1,030 regulars; 6,800 support elements; and a mass base of 66,500.

Apparently, the suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus (from August 21, 1971 to January 10, 1972) failed to deter the insurgents, as they continued launching several daring and aggressive attacks against major Armed Forces of the Philippines tactical installations.

In the field of psychological warfare, the NPA/CPP have stepped up their operations. They began organizing and mobilizing the masses in the rural areas into various Committees, as part of the relentless drive to gain political support.

In particular, they aimed to awaken the political consciousness of the masses and to prepare them for the inevitable armed encounter against the Government. Two documents captured in the province of Zambales last April 25, 1972, confirmed the NPA/CPP expansion at the grass roots level. Mention was made of the need for the training of "cultural cadres" for deployment in the countryside as well as for the intensification of the "cultural revolution" to be spear-headed by the intelligentsia, and nationalistic youth and labour groups in the urban areas.

The crucial point which indicated an increase in the NPA/CPP's capability, the area of operations, as well as manpower and firepower of the NPA, was the M. V. Karagatan or Palanan Incident in Palanan, province of Isabela last July 4-5, 1972. This was the landing by an ocean-going ship of a substantial number of high-powered weapons and thousands of rounds of ammunition of which only a portion were recovered by the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The landing of such vast quantities of war materiel thus confirmed earlier claims of the NPA that they are well-funded and also that they now have sources of funds and equipment not only inside the Philippines but also outside of the country.

That Maoist-trained forces were behind the increased incidence of terrorism, with the aim of subverting and ultimately overthrowing the established order, was recognized by no less than the Philippine Supreme Court in its decision in a test case (LANSANG vs. GARCIA) dated December 11, 1971. It may be noted that from the time the Supreme Court promulgated this decision, the danger of Communist-inspired insurgency became even graver with rebellion worsening or escalating.

In the six weeks prior to the imposition of martial law, urban guerrilla warfare, characterized mainly by a series of bombing incidents totalling nineteen in number, was launched within the Greater Manila Area. Targets were Government offices, public utilities, schools, banks, places of entertainment and other commercial establishments. Widespread fear and panic ensued, as a consequence of which normal operations and functions of private as well as Government entities became paralyzed. In Manila and the suburbs, tension and anxiety reached the point where the citizens became afraid to venture outside their homes. Moreover, the incidents of lawlessness and criminality, kidnapping, smuggling, extortion, black-mail, armed robbery, illegal traffic in drugs, gun-running, hoarding and manipulation of prices, corruption of Government, tax-evasion, perpetrated by syndicated criminals, rose to record levels heightening the already acute sense of fear and anxiety felt throughout the country.

That the Communists were bent on carrying out an all-out offensive was by this time becoming fully evident. The pattern of Communist activity, particularly urban guerrilla warfare being launched in Metropolitan Manila was seen as being clearly in line with the "Regional Program of Action for 1972" prepared by the subversives to be carried out as part of the over-all plan of the Party to foment discontent and precipitate the tide of nation-wide revolution.

Faced by this immediate and awesome danger, unprecedented in terms of scale and intensity posed by the revolutionaries, Government authorities saw that they had no other recourse except to use the stronger powers of the Constitution. Indeed, there was no doubt in anyone's mind that Government capability and resources under the existing order would not be equal to the task of preserving and saving the Republic. Hence, the ultimate resort to invoke the extraordinary power—martial law.

Martial Law In the Philippines

Within a period of forty-eight hours, martial law was imposed throughout the Philippines, in a manner which may be described as quietly, quickly, effectively, and with no bloodshed. Observers have already noted that there was no need for the Chief Executive as Commander-in-Chief, to call out elements of the Armed Forces of the Philippines in large numbers or to use them to any extraordinarily unusual degree. Hence, the almost visual absence of guns, tanks, or soldiers appearing in the streets. The troops were dispatched only to secure and seal the offices of communications and mass media in the early hours of martial law. Within forty-eight hours, communications were said to have been normalized.

Civil-Military Relations

The proclamation of martial law as instituted in the Philippines has not involved the take-over by the military of all instrumentalities and functions of Government. Rather it has only stressed the more active participation of the military in civil affairs. Civilian authorities remain in control of their respective offices and/or areas of jurisdiction and are discharging their duties as before within the limits of the situation.

As Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the President assumed direct control of the entire Governmental machinery, by designating himself as Chief Martial Law Administrator. All orders, decrees, and instructions are issued by him.

For its part, the military has assumed the task of helping the civilian authorities to coordinate or implement the various Presidential decrees and orders so that the restoration of normalcy and desired charges may be quickly established within the New Society. To this end, the Armed Forces of the Philippines has created its Central Information Center staffed by military lawyers and competent officers so that people seeking clarification, assistance, or information in connexion with Proclamation 1081 and general orders and letters of instruction issued under it may be quickly aided and assisted.

With the end in view of stabilizing the peace and order situation within the country, the President has instructed the Philippine Constabulary and municipal police agencies to expedite the collection or confiscation of high-powered weapons, ammunitions and explosives from unauthorized and authorized persons.

Moreover, the Armed Forces has likewise combined forces with the police agencies to round-up criminals, drug-pushers, smugglers, maintainers of private armies, and all those other persons responsible for creating an atmosphere of fear and anxiety among our people.

Another proof that the civilian authorities have not been replaced or supplanted by the military is seen by the fact that the Supreme Court of the Philippines has begun to hear arguments on the petitions for habeas corpus of those people picked up and detained under Proclamation 1081.

The constitution of military courts was ordered to try and decide cases against persons detained or who may be detained by the Armed Forces under the martial law proclamation. General Order No. 12 has outlined the jurisdiction of the new military tribunals. Under this Order, almost all violations of the country's penal laws, with the exception of those involving chastity, civil status of persons and honour, presently fall under the exclusive jurisdiction of the newly-established military courts.

It might be said that the imposition of martial law and the subsequent arrest of key personalities have practically placed the insurgent and subversive elements of our society on the defensive if not on the run. Although there are indications that the insurgents are regrouping and consolidating their forces in their mountain strongholds located in Rizal and Quezon Provinces, the Armed Forces of the Philippines have taken the necessary precautionary measures to prevent the insurgents from gaining sufficient strength as to attempt a stab towards Manila. Sufficiently strong counter-measures have been instituted by the military authorities to cope with any counter-thrust by the insurgents.

Response of People to Martial Law to Date

Thus far the majority of the people have reacted favourably to the new conditions. Many have commented that: "Perhaps it (Martial Law) is the kind of thing we needed all the time—discipline, order, and security." By and large, peace and order have been restored. Congratulatory telegrams from provincial and local officials have been flooding Malacanang Palace, enthusiastically welcoming and commending President Marcos for what they call "moves long overdue." Some reported that: "the man in the street after hours of anxiety before the formal proclamation of the law generally wished the President well in his reform program." There were no real visible adverse effects other than the momentary rush of panic-buying or the withdrawing of precious savings from the country's banking system.

Reports from local Government police agencies in the country enthuse over the marked drop in the rate of criminality and lawlessness. Following the proclamation of martial law, the volume of offences reported nationwide slumped, now registering a decrease of 52%. The drive against firearms of various calibres yielded 24,000 pieces in three weeks—a quantity which could have taken the whole Philippine Constabulary command 1,250 weeks or 24 years to collect without martial law. Gunrunning syndicates operating in or around the US military bases in the Philippines and illegal gunshops have suspended operations. The drive against narcotics led to the arrest of some 137 persons and the confiscation of 17,650,000 Pesos (US$ 2,758,000) worth of narcotics. A military tribunal is hearing the case against a Chinese narcotics manufacturer and two Filipino pushers.

Even more palpable has been the reaction of the ordinary housewife who had to contend with ever-rising prices and artificial shortages of basic food commodities and household supplies before the martial law period. Since that time, spiralling prices have been arrested if not lowered, and supply of basic commodities such as rice and sugar has since been adequate and steady.

Even more reassuring has been the response of the private sector to President Marcos' moves to stimulate business and industry. The local stock market is currently experiencing a boom. Much of this remarkable recovery within the past two weeks has been due to the fact that President Marcos has removed many of the deterrents to the local market. By reducing the stock transfer tax to one-fourth percent and by suspending the capital gains

tax up to June 30, 1973, needed capital had been flushed out from hiding into a reactivated market.

To stimulate the entry of foreign capital into the country, the Government has liberalized the conditions under which oil exploration and drilling may proceed. In the process of redefining the country's economic and infrastructure needs, many Government agencies are giving all the needed incentives to business, trade, commerce, and industry. Hopefully, if the domestic climate for investment improves, perhaps foreign traders and industrialists might likewise be more willing to help us develop a more balanced and industrialized economy.

Thus it can be seen that apart from the arrests of those directly involved in the conspiracy to overthrow the duly constituted Government by violence and subversion, and the control of all communications, media and of vital public utilities, and the temporary suspension of classes at the upper educational levels, practically all the actions taken by the Government in resolving the existing national emergency and in bringing about the desired changes in society as well as Government have all been positive in character.

Initially, this has included:

1) the proclamation of land reform all over the Philippines to effect a more equitable distribution of agricultural lands, with the ultimate hope of increasing production;

2) the reorganization of the Government along more efficient lines;

3) the drawing of new rules and conduct for the civil service, military, and the rest of society as well;

4) the removal of corrupt and inefficient public officials and their replacement with more qualified and morally up-right individuals; and

5) the breaking up of criminal syndicates.

To ensure the maintenance of the prevailing peace and order, the President has also disarmed all unauthorized persons of their unlicensed weapons and has instituted strict measures to control the use of firearms. It has become apparent to one and all that there was indeed a need for the emergence of a new force to bring about genuine changes in the Philippines. In the meantime, it has been found necessary to curtail some privileges of our people so that Governmental authorities may be given more time and a broader latitude of freedom to fully consolidate the gains made in the past two weeks against subversion and lawlessness.

It is too early to make a conclusive judgment about the over-all effects of martial law in the Philippines. Developments are relatively fluid but the trends pointing to some kind of stability being achieved in the coming weeks are promising. As far as the immediate and most compelling reason for declaring martial law is concerned –namely, the insurgent threat, I feel it is quite in order for me to say that the Government has the situation now well under control. Any probable future moves by the insurgents to challenge Government forces anew will be met with more than equal force–and chances are that the Government will increasingly be in a better position to neutralize if not to completely annihilate the subversive threat in the coming months.

On the whole, in recapitulation–what prospects lie ahead for the Philippines in the light of the prevailing circumstances? Barring unforseen developments, the Philippines is definitely facing these four objectives:

1) to contain, if not altogether eliminate the threat to national security;

2) to cope with rising prices and steer the economy towards increased production;

3) to redistribute the national income and resources along the lines of lesser inequality; and

4) to attend to all tasks while the political and Governmental systems undergo reassessment and probably some fundamental restructuring to accommodate the new social attitudes, sentiments and requirements.

For some time, there may be scepticism in the sincerity of President Marcos in bringing about reforms in my country. We in the Armed Forces of the Philippines believe that his decision is a profound step that only a great leader with sincere faith in his people would dare to take.

It is obvious enough that martial law in my country is in furtherance of our anti-Communist stand. By declaring martial law under the aegis of our well-loved democratic traditions, and as an exercise of a perfectly valid Constitutional prerogative, in the face of a major national crisis, President Marcos is demonstrating to the world at large and to our people in particular the strength, the wisdom and the resiliency of the Philippines' political system.

Mutual Defence Alliances in a Changing World

by Secretary-General Sunthorn Hongladarom

Mr. Sunthorn Hongladarom is the Secretary-General of the South-East Asia Treaty Organization. One of Thailand's foremost statesmen, he has held the posts of Thai Ambassador to the United States and to the United Kingdom.

IN this world of changing circumstances, defence alliances have continued to survive and function usefully by keeping abreast with the times and responding in meaningful ways to the changing needs of its members.

The subject of mutual defence alliances is a vast one and therefore I limit this article to discussing my own views on how they operate, and how their validity stands to be affected by the significant changes in the international scene within the past decade.

I should like to begin by briefly reviewing the several factors which contribute towards the power of a nation on the international scene, observing that where alliances exist they are inevitably a function of national power.

Of these factors, better known as the Elements of National Power, there are those which are relatively stable and those which are subject to constant change.

Geography, obviously, is the most stable factor upon which the power of a nation depends. For instance, the fact that the American continent is separated from land masses on either side by large bodies of water is an important permanent factor that helps determine the influence of the United States in the world. It is fallacious to assume, as most laymen do, that the advent of sophisticated transportation and communications, and modern techniques of warfare has completely eliminated the isolating characteristics of the ocean. Thailand is not only in the same land mass as Communist China; it is also either bordered by or in close proximity to the troubled countries of South-east Asia.

Natural resources are another stable factor which have an important influence upon the power of a nation. A country that is self-sufficient, or relatively so, in food and in those natural resources which are important for industrial production and for the conduct of war, has a great advantage over a nation that is dependent on other countries for its supply. Certainly it is not by accident that the two most powerful countries in the world, the United States and the Soviet Union, are almost completely self-sufficient in the raw materials required for modern industrial production, and, in respect of those raw materials which they do not themselves produce, have control over access to the sources.

The technology of modern communications and warfare has made the development of heavy industry a major and indispensable element in determining national power. Often, countries rich in raw materials find it difficult to adapt these materials for both peace and war because they do not have an industrial establishment commensurate with their abundance of raw materials. Lack of industrial capacity accounts for the big gaps between the potentiality and actuality of power.

The actual importance to the power of a nation of the aforementioned factors of geography, natural resources and industrial capacity lies in military preparedness. This particular element need not be discussed in any detail, since the dependence of power upon military preparedness is only too obvious to require elaboration.

While it is obviously not true to say that a country's power depends upon the size of its population, it is nevertheless true that, all factors remaining constant, a nation which is not populous enough cannot expect international power. At the same time, a nation with an educated population would have better chances at attaining power than one with a relatively under-developed or backward population.

National character also plays a permanent and often decisive role in influencing a nation's power in international politics. What is important here is not so much the factors which develop a national character, as the fact that certain qualities of character and intellect recur more frequently in one nation than in another.

National morale refers to the degree of determination with which a nation supports the government in peace or war, and it is invariably revealed in times of national crises. It is one of the more elusive and less stable elements of power.

Most important, however unstable, of all the factors that make for the power of a nation is the quality of its diplomacy. This integrates the other elements, giving them purpose and direction, and brings them to bear upon

those aspects of the international situation which concern the national interest most directly.

The quality of government will determine, firstly, its ability to strike a balance between the nation's resources and the foreign policy which it should pursue, and secondly, to balance the different elements of national power with one another. Having achieved these balances, a government must then be able to secure the approval of the people for its foreign policy as well as its domestic policies aimed at mobilizing in its favour all the elements of national power.

From this brief review of the elements of national power, it is obvious that three of the factors, being directly associated with a nation's policy of alliances, are likely to come under its influence. I refer to military preparedness, industrial capacity, and the quality of a country's diplomacy. The other elements are influenced less directly by a nation's alliance policy.

What are the functions of alliances? What motivates the big powers to enter into alliances with lesser allies? What impels the developing nations to align themselves with the big powers?

The functions of alliance are varied. As an institutional device, an alliance may aim principally at augmenting insufficient power, or it may be designed to control an ally's employment of power even while enhancing it. The former finds expression in pacts of mutual assistance or guarantees, intended to safeguard individual powers against a superior enemy power, and the international system against imbalance. In the latter case, the purpose of alliance is to protect the contracting parties against betrayal, counter-alliance and the like, in situations of extreme instability. The third major function of an alliance is to promote international order, for example, when the alliance is meant to legitimize or strengthen one or both allied regimes against the spread of domestic instability.

Implicit in the function of alliance are the motives of the individual states. The motives of the lesser powers may be contained within the headings of security, stability and status. Small nations enter into alliances to ensure their security against possible threats from comparable lesser powers or clearly superior powers. Where the threat pertains to lesser powers, an alliance with a great power could involve the bigger power's providing the necessary military supplies in order to approximate, if not equal, the adversary's capability. Another major objective for alliance with bigger powers is the lesser ally's concern for stability. Military alliances are invariably related to the grant of economic and other aid to the less developed ally in order to encourage military strength. Finally, a lesser ally may align itself with a bigger power in order to enhance its prestige and status.

Powerful nations enter into "unequal alliances" for somewhat different reasons.

Basically, they are concerned with the additional power of smaller nations, which can provide invaluable facilities for the more effective conduct of military operations. Although modern military technology has resulted in diminishing the importance of this factor, even in respect to bases and related facilities, there are other factors, such as the cultural and racial considerations attending the rise of regional powers like the People's Republic of China, which cannot but enhance the usefulness of alliances with lesser states.

The desire to divert the power of small developing countries from alliances with an adversary, may motivate a big power, even where aggregation of power as an incentive is peripheral. It may, for example, be particularly important for the powerful nation to woo a smaller nation to its own cause, even at the expense of the powerful nation's saddling itself with an economic and political liability.

A third motive for such types of alliances, is to disguise control by the greater power over the lesser ally's actions. This may assume greater prominence in the future should conflicts among the less developed nations increase, and should nuclear weapons become more available to smaller countries.

Whatever the motives of nations, large or small, to enter into defence agreements, governments will, in any event, act in what they currently conceive as being their best interests. The wording of a pact is almost always flexible, as is the wording in a national constitution. Rather than being absolute and precise commitments, the pacts and treaties are expressions of intent by the governments, who do not enter into such commitments lightly. Pacts are meant to be kept; and honesty and good faith usually oblige allies to honour their agreements.

Much of the lack of confidence in mutual defence agreements today may be traced to the fact that many people expect too much of treaties. They see a treaty as a contract, binding in all circumstances, and demand firm and continuing commitments. When these elements are missing they condemn the treaty as worthless.

The truth is that a defence pact, normally a definite sign of a critical situation, is necessarily a creation of circumstance, drafted according to current needs.

* * * * * *

Before continuing to discuss the future prospects of alliances, I should like to describe briefly the major defence organizations of the world.

I will begin with the Communist world. The Eastern European Military Assistance Treaty, or Warsaw Pact as it is generally known, is the equivalent, in Eastern Europe, of NATO in the West. It is a 20-year treaty of friendship, co-operation and mutual assistance signed in Warsaw on 14 May 1955 by Albania, Poland, Rumania and the Soviet Union.

Prior to the conclusion of the Warsaw Pact, the Soviet Union had made bilateral agreements with Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Poland, and after 1947, it signed similar bilateral agreements with Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria.

Later, the Warsaw Pact was supplemented by treaties regarding the stationing of Soviet troops in Eastern European countries, and by bilateral treaties of friendship and mutual assistance concluded with many members of the Warsaw Pact Organization. The present membership of the Warsaw Pact Organization includes Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Rumania and the Soviet Union.

Under the Warsaw Pact, "in the event of an armed attack in Europe on one or several States that are signatories of the treaty by any State or group of States, each party to this treaty shall render the State or States so attacked immediate assistance, individually and in agreement with other States, by all the means it may consider necessary including the use of armed force", and the parties to the treaty "shall immediately consult among themselves on the necessary joint measures to be adopted . . ." Also specifically provided for in the Warsaw Pact is the setting up by the Members "of a joint command for certain of their armed forces which are placed under such command by agreement among the parties . . ."

The Soviet Union and some of the other Communist countries of Europe have also concluded treaties of friendship and mutual assistance with the People's Republic of China, Mongolia, North Vietnam and other Asian Communist countries.

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The major Free World defence alliances include the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the South-East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), the Pacific Security Treaty (ANZUS), the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), and the Organization of American States (OAS).

The North Atlantic Treaty was signed on 4 April 1949 to provide for the collective defence and security of the Western world through an international organization. NATO has fifteen members, namely, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, the German Federal Republic, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. Under the Treaty, the members "agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all, and consequently agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them will assist the party or parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area."

SEATO came into being with the signing of the South-East Asia Collective Defence Treaty in Manila on 8 September 1954 by Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States. Under the Treaty, "each party recognizes that aggression by means of armed attack in the treaty area against any of the parties, or against any State or territory which the parties by unanimous agreement may hereinafter designate, would endanger its own peace and safety, and agrees that it will, in that event, act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes."

The Pacific Security Treaty or, more commonly, the ANZUS Pact, is a tripartite treaty between Australia, New Zealand and the United States signed on 1 September 1951. Under the pact, "each party recognizes that an armed attack in the Pacific area on any of the other parties would be dangerous to its own peace and safety, and declares that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes."

The pact of the Central Treaty Organization is identical with the earlier Baghdad Pact of which the members were the present members of CENTO, namely Iran, Pakistan, Turkey and the United Kingdom, with the addition of Iraq. Iraq withdrew from the Baghdad Pact on 24 March 1959, at which time the name of the Alliance was officially changed to Central Treaty Organization. The United States is an associate member of the Alliance. Under the terms of the Pact, the parties are pledged "to co-operate for their security and defence"; in addition, "such measures as they agree to take to give effect to this co-operation may form the subject of special agreements with each other." Unlike other free world collective defence treaties, the pact of CENTO is so worded as to remain in force initially for five years, renewable after each five-year period.

Formed in 1948 as a regional alliance to foster mutual understanding and co-ordination among the nations of the Western Hemisphere, the Organization of American States has for its members all of the Americas, except Canada and Cuba, which was excluded from the Organization in 1962. The Treaty provides, inter alia, that "every act of aggression against an American State shall be considered an act of aggression against the other American States", and that "if the territorial integrity, sovereignty or political independence of any American State is affected by an armed attack or other act of aggression, or by an extra-continental conflict, or a conflict between two or more American States, the American States shall apply the measures and procedures established in (the) special treaties on the subject."

Noteworthy is the fact that the various Free World collective defence treaties almost invariably leave to the national governments concerned in each case, the decision to intervene in any conflict involving any of its fellow members. Automatic rendering of assistance to any ally which has suddenly become the object of aggression is not necessarily pre-ordained, except possibly in the wording of the NATO agreement.

This inherent weakness of most Free World alliances is remedied to some extent by continuous mutual preplanning for likely military contingencies by representatives of the Member Governments. In any case, very much of the nature, the size, and also the speed of an

ally's assistance to another in an emergency would depend on the capabilities of the former and the situation at the time of the event.

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There are, of course, other relatively less well-defined Free World alliances for mutual defence, such as the Five-Power Agreement between Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Malaysia and Singapore for the defence of the two Asian partners. There is no formal treaty: the specific agreements are enshrined in the final communique issued by their Ministers who met in London in April 1971. This looser arrangement superseded the 14-year-old Anglo-Malayan Defence Pact. While the old pact firmly committed the United Kingdom to defend Malaya and Singapore against external attack, the new defence arrangement only requires Britain, as well as Australia and New Zealand, to consult with Singapore and Malaysia in the event of an outside attack or threat.

Also part of the worldwide system of interlocking Free World defence arrangements are a fair number of bilateral mutual defence treaties between certain big powers of the West and individual allies. The United States, for instance, has bilateral treaties for mutual defence with Japan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Nationalist China and many others.

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How do we see alliances and alliance policy working in the light of recent important changes and trends in international politics?

On the basis of the major political developments of the past decade, the clear bipolarity that characterized the power configuration of the post-World War II era is fast disappearing. With particular reference to this part of the world, a multi-power system—involving specifically the United States, the Soviet Union, Japan, the People's Republic of China and, to a lesser degree, India—appears to be replacing the bipolar configuration.

The establishment, through President Nixon's visit to China, of a *de facto* channel of communication with Peking, the new forward-looking diplomacy of the People's Republic of China which seems to be geared to reducing unnecessary tension with other powers, the recent establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Japan, and the signs, however nebulous, that Chou-en-lai and Kosygin are ready to come to some agreement not only with each other but also with India and Japan—all this is evidence of an evolving multi-nation configuration of power. India, to many observers of international politics, may not now be an important member of the new system, but her current dominance of the South Asia scene and her key role in the strategic sea-lanes of the Indian Ocean—which are vital to the other big powers ensure her long-term importance in it.

While constantly in fear of the result of the Chinese diplomatic offensive, the Soviet Union has itself increased its sway in the Indian Ocean area and in Southeast Asia. It has intermittently foisted the idea of a collective security arrangement in Asia.

It would be grossly unrealistic to say that this emerging change in the power configuration in Asia and the Pacific would have little impact on alliances and alliance policy. The precise shape and degree of this impact are, however, difficult to predict at this time.

As an integral part of the change in bipolarity and the Cold War, the gap between alliance and non-alignment is expected to be reduced. We all know that non-alignment and neutrality, the refusal to enter into any formal or permanent alliance with a nation party to the East-West conflict, thrive on conditions which are only transient. As a national policy, therefore, neutrality is impracticable. Thus, for different reasons several non-aligned states have moved towards alignment—Indonesia first with China, and later with its smaller neighbours; Burma with China; the Khmer Republic (or Cambodia) with China and later with the United States, and India with the United States and the Soviet Union.

Although the proliferation of nuclear weapons would introduce new problems of both deterrence and control, this is not likely to change the existing pattern of international alliances. Should nuclear weapons remain confined to the large industrial powers, the result would probably be stalemate, based on multilateral deterrence among regional nuclear powers and a durable nuclear imbalance between the United States and any other single nuclear power. In any event, the United States as a super power, and even some lesser powers, are likely to continue having access to a given region for purposes of intervention or influence. If, on the other hand, nuclear weapons spread to the non-industrial powers, the chances are that such lesser power nuclear capability would be so insignificant as to be able adequately to alter any existing balances of power and deterrence among the industrial states. In the unlikely event of abuse, or extreme instability among the smaller nations, the great nuclear power would presumably come under pressure to proceed to some form of concerted control action.

Within Asia, the reduction in the involvement in Asian affairs by the great powers of the West, would seem to foreshadow the end of free world alliances in this part of the world. This is illusory and misleading. Both the United States and the United Kingdom have pledged time and again that they will abide by their treaty obligations and continue to interest themselves in Asia. The Nixon doctrine does not envisage the United State's disengaging from South-East Asia; America is committed to honour its treaty commitments, to remain a Pacific power, to continue to provide a nuclear shield, and to furnish economic and military aid to its friends and allies.

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The current trend towards regionalism in Asia--evidenced by the formation in recent years of several new political aggregations, among them the Asian and Pacific Council (ASPAC), the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the South-East Asia Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO)--has served to underline even more fully the importance of mutual defence alliances in the region. There is, at least for the present, a marked reluctance on the part of all these groupings to assume a substantive defence role now or in the near future. This is understandable since, at their present stage, to do so would jeopardize the new groups' main tasks of development.

The ASEAN declaration of intention of November 1970 "to exert initially necessary efforts to secure the recognition of, and respect for, South-east Asia as a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality, free from any manner of interference by outside powers", while laudable in its aims and purposes, is to my mind unrealistic. In the eighteen years since the Geneva Accords gave implicit effect to neutralism in Indo-China, many have advocated collective action to establish neutrality as a means of checking instability and attaining peace in Asia. But while a country or group of countries may decide unilaterally to pursue a policy of neutrality, neutralization requires an international set of guarantees from powers which might be in a position to threaten such neutrality. Such a system is unlikely to materialize at this time. If it does, it will not come easily. Despite China's apparently more moderate approach to foreign policy, and her admission to the United Nations, her support for Communist insurgent groups in South-east Asia has not waned. The Soviet Union appears to be suspicious of any plan to neutralize the region. Until they have attained absolute guarantees from the big powers that their neutrality will be respected, the ASEAN and other free countries in the region are not likely to give up their mutual defence ties with other countries.

Perhaps the one change with the biggest impact on Free World mutual defence alliances is the change in the nature and extent of the Communist threat. After the Second World War and until the mid 1960s, the principal threat to the security of the developing countries of East Asia and the Pacific, as also to that of the countries of Western Europe, was overt Communist attack. In both areas, the nature of the threat particularly has changed considerably. In Europe, the chances of Communist overt attack have decreased somewhat, and there is now a prospect of a European Security Conference involving countries on both sides of the East-West conflict. The change in the threat has been more dramatic in South-east Asia, where the principal danger now lies in the more subtle but clearly more dangerous threat of Communist subversion and infiltration. This shift in the threat facing free Asian countries has compelled SEATO to make adjustments in order to produce greater effectiveness in our counter-subversion and counter-insurgency efforts. Our immediate aim is to see that, while continuing to maintain a deterrent influence through military preparedness, all our resources available for countering subversion and insurgency, including the expertise, advice and material available in the Military Planning Office, are directed to this, our prime task.

The trend in alliances and alliance policy at present would seem to be toward less positive forms of military co-operation, in other words, lesser military integration. A parallel trend has been toward political, economic and other non-military co-operation as a supplement to relatively fading or yet undeveloped military links.

From the foregoing, there is no question of the continuing need for alliances in the changing world. But the specific organizations, which are the product of alliance policy, must themselves be able to adapt quickly and meaningfully to the more enduring changes in international circumstances, or they outlive their usefulness. The prospects for alliances, qualified by unfavourable developments of the past, are therefore contingent upon the policy-makers' ability to adjust to past failings and future requirements.

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I shall now turn specifically to Thailand's present alliance policy.

Thailand's policy of alliances is enshrined mainly in its involvement in SEATO, in special mutual defence arrangements with the United States, and in border agreements with its neighbours. Unlike other free South-east Asian countries, such as Japan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and the Republic of China, Thailand does not have a bilateral mutual defence treaty with the United States. The closest to a formal bilateral defence pact binding Thailand with the United States is the famous Thanat/Rusk Communique of 6 March 1962. This agreement, which in fact is an amplification of the operative paragraphs of the Manila Pact, reads:

> "The Foreign Minister and the Secretary of State reviewed the close association of Thailand and the United States in the South-East Asia Collective Defence Treaty and agreed that such association is an effective deterrent to direct Communist aggression against Thailand. They agreed that the treaty provides the basis for the signatories collectively to assist Thailand in case of Communist armed attack against that country. The Secretary of State assured the Foreign Minister that in the event of such aggression, the United States intends to give full effect to its obligations under the treaty to act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes. The Secretary of State reaffirmed that this obligation of the United States does not depend upon the prior agreement of all other

parties to the treaty, since this treaty obligation is individual as well as collective..."

Since the enunciation of the Thanat/Rusk agreement, other signatories to the South-East Asia Collective Defence Treaty have accepted its underlying principle.

It was in fact in the spirit of the Thanat/Rusk interpretation of the Manila Pact that Thailand, along with four other members of SEATO–Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines and the United States–sent military forces to assist a Protocol State, the Republic of Vietnam, at a certain stage of the Vietnam war.

In conclusion, I summarize: alliances, by their very nature, are a function of the influence of a nation in the international scene. Depending on whether they are strong or weak, nations enter into "unequal alliances" for essentially different reasons, quite apart from the common values that they might precisely be banding together to protect. Whatever the motives, Governments are, in any event, likely to act in what they conceive at the moment of decision to be their best interests. Pacts should, therefore, be looked upon not as absolute and precise commitments, but rather as expressions of intent by Governments, who do not enter into such commitments lightly. Alliances tend presently toward less positive forms of military cooperation and to political, economic and other civil cooperation as a supplement to fading or yet undeveloped military links. There is a continuing need for alliances in the rapidly changing world, but the specific organizations or agencies for mutual defence must themselves be able to adapt rapidly and meaningfully to the more permanent changes in the international circumstances, if they are to remain valid and responsive to the requirements of the times. □

Binh Dinh: the Anatomy of a Province

by Douglas Pike

The author is a United States' Foreign Service Officer. Douglas Pike is an internationally known authority on Vietnam, a subject he has written on extensively and lectured on in many countries.

IF only one province out of South Vietnam's 44 provinces were to be singled out as representative and exemplary of the long tragedy that is the Vietnam war, it would be the province of Binh Dinh.

Here in the past decade one can find written in blood all the elements of the drama of brother against brother that mark the incredibly complex struggle called revolutionary guerrilla war. What has happened and is happening in Binh Dinh is Vietnam's recent history in microcosm.

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Descriptions of Binh Dinh make it seem unique, as it is, but its uniqueness does not make it atypical.

The central fact about Binh Dinh is that it is a labyrinth of political inter-connexions and social relationships, many of them of ancient heritage. They stem from regional political movements which in the previous century under the French were clandestine, from exotic local religions some highly militant, and from a welter of clan-based relations. A French newsman of long experience in Binh Dinh once called it: "politically the most interesting province in the country," adding that local politics there "rivaled 15th century Italy under the Borgias." This political and social complexity defies simplication and illustrates as little else can, the futility of attempting to view Vietnam as a "war" divorced from Vietnam as a political struggle.

The province also is the Communist heartland in the South, and so acknowledged by Hanoi. Here the Communist movement has its most enduring history, its deepest roots, and because they stem from blood kinship-the strongest ties with the general population. Paradoxically here in Binh Dinh within the Communist movement itself now has developed the greatest internal challenge to Party dogma, one being met by Party leaders with the firmest kind of repression.

The intra-Party warfare serves to add weight to the contention of many of the best local observers, that when peace finally has come to Vietnam, the war will go on in Binh Dinh.

The Province

Basic data of Binh Dinh can be sketched briefly. The province consists of 9,526 square kilometres on the South China Sea, the sixth coastal province down the shoreline from the 17th parallel which divides North and South Vietnam. It has a population of about one million, living in nine towns[1] and 101 villages (which are divided into 660 hamlets). It is the richest and most densely populated province in Central Vietnam.

The villages of its nine districts[2] where live more than two-thirds of the entire population, are clustered tightly, and differ markedly from the fortified ring villages of the highlands or the string villages, one house wide, built along the canals and waterways in the Mekong Delta. Binh Dinh villages are old, with worn paths and deep shade from Flame of the Jungle trees and other exotic tropical growth. The houses, gateways festooned with frangipani, are settled and coolly comfortable. The people, almost all ethnic Vietnamese[3] are traditional, self-contained, conservative and suspicious of foreigners. Above all they are proud. They hold family and clan ties closely and never forget a blood debt. Outsiders regard them as politically obscure, vague in language and often displaying an Annamese contempt for their Tonkinese neighbours to the North and their Cochin-Chinese neighbours to the South. They do not particularly approve of any Saigon government, regardless of its make-up or what it might be attempting to do for them. Often they stubbornly resist central Government programmes that can only bring them benefit.

Here in Binh Dinh in July and August blow the Winds of Laos. Down from the high plateaux they come hot,

1 Including the province capital, Qui Nhon, which has grown from a sleepy port town of 9,000 (1945) to become a major distribution centre for the Highlands and Central Vietnam, with a population of more than 100,000.

2 The districts are: An Tuc, Hoan Nhon, Hoan An, Phu My, Phu Cat, Binh Khe, An Nhon and Tuy Phuoc.

3 Only five percent of the Binh Dinh population are ethnically, non-Vietnamese, i.e. Cambodian (Khmer) and Montagnard.

dry, provoking intense evaporation and sometimes blowing with extreme violence.

When the monsoon rains come, they can deal devastating blows. Sudden, heavy inundations–Qui Nhon recorded 309 mm. of rain in eight hours on November 12, 1924–bring flash floods that can quickly wipe out rice land dikes and sweep away homes. The rainfall, however, is irregular and the not uncommon droughts can cut farm yield by as much as one-third.

The province has about 100,000 hectares of land cultivated with rice. But the acreage of rice land is reduced by the intrusion of the uplands. Binh Dinh is a province of abrupt coastal mountains and narrow coastal plains which sharply reduce the high intensity rice cultivation belt, that is, the 25-metre contour line that is the limit of intensive rice cultivation.

The terrain and the poverty of much of the soil has caused the farmers of Binh Dinh to turn to secondary crops for livelihood. It is the country's major producer of peanuts (ground nuts) and the number two producer of corn and manioc (used to make the vermicelli which is virtually the national dish of Vietnam). Also grown here are sugar cane, sweet potatoes, tobacco and oil coconuts.

Because of its proximity to the sea and because two-thirds of the population live within 15 miles of the coast, fishing has naturally developed in Binh Dinh. Daily some 26,000 fishermen go to sea in some 5,000 boats[4] to produce yearly an average of 100,000 metric tons of fish.

In the French days, the province exported a good deal of silk, salt and areca nuts but those markets, especially silk, have seriously declined in the past decade.

Statistically, Binh Dinh is the richest province in Central Vietnam but then, Central Vietnam is far less affluent then the Mekong Delta. The agricultural yields in Binh Dinh are high because the land is more intensively cultivated than in the bountiful Delta. The April and September rice harvests, in the French days, averaged only 12 quintals per hectare, compared with 25 quintals per hectare in the best of the Mekong Delta land. This rice production record gradually has been improved in the past 15 years. But even today farmers in the Delta can produce up to twice as much rice on the same acreage as in Binh Dinh, and with less effort[5].

Binh Dinh is the most densely populated province in Central Vietnam and overpopulation is, as it has long been, a serious problem. Some 30 years ago, French colonials recorded that Binh Dinh had 300 people per square kilometre of farm land. The province-wide population density rate is now estimated at 100 persons per square kilometre. But this is deceptive since most of the population is concentrated along the coast. For example, Tuy Phuoc District, on the sea, has about 390,000 people while giant An Tuc District, which borders on five provinces and covers the entire eastern third of Binh Dinh, has a population of only about 36,000.

Contrary to widespread belief, Vietnam is not a poverty ridden country. It is, in fact, one of the three or four richest per-capita nations of Asia. Its potential for economic growth is second to none. Particularly in the agricultural sector, all of the requirements and few of the handicaps are present for the development of a superb agriculture. Virtually the sole exception to this is Binh Dinh Province and parts of neighboring Quang Ngai and Phu Yen Provinces. This area is one of the few in Vietnam with an endemic kind of grinding poverty, of the sort found in South Asia. It is a poverty growing out of conditions largely beyond the individual: sandy soil, irregular and undependable rainfall, too many people and too little land. As a result, Binh Dinh has large pockets of rural slums, the answer to which can only be relocation.

Fortunately for Vietnam–and this is one of the reasons her potential for growth is so bright–she is not plagued by the worst of all modern day world problems, one which eclipses even the problem of war, and that is overpopulation. Vietnam has much good empty land. But governmental efforts to relocate overcrowded Binh Dinh farmers have been slow and discouraging since the traditional minded people there are reluctant to move.

The Communists

The unique character of Binh Dinh's relationship with the Communist side in the war begins at least as far back as the Viet Minh days.

One of the arrangements resulting from the 1954 Geneva Conference on Indochina was the opportunity for voluntary relocation offered all Vietnamese. This Operation Exodus as it came to be called saw some one million North Vietnamese move to South Vietnam and some 60,000 to 90,000[6] persons move to North Vietnam. Of those who moved north, virtually all came from Central Vietnam and fully half came from Binh Dinh Province.[7]

The physical description of Binh Dinh above suggests that most moved north for economic, not ideological reasons. Climate, soil condition, over-population, all were pressures which served to convince the 30,000 to 40,000 who left the province that life in North Vietnam must be better and could be no more difficult than in Binh Dinh.

The transfer was to prove historically significant and indeed was fundamental in shaping the insurgency that developed in the following decade.

4 Of which only half are mechanized.

5 The 1971 Binh Dinh rice yields ranged from 1,600 to 2,000 metric tons per hectare.

6 According to International Control Commission records, the figure was about 90,000, while ship manifests (chiefly Polish vessels) which transported most of the southerners north, total only about 60,000.

7 International Control Commission records indicate that about 85 percent came out of six districts (of a nation-wide total then of 230 districts) in Binh Dinh, Phu Yen and Quang Ngai provinces; only about five percent came from the Mekong Delta.

The first great wave of infiltrators from North Vietnam, who generated the subsequent revolutionary guerrilla war, was not made up of North Vietnamese Army regular troops–as was later the case–but of what were called Southern Regroupees, those southerners who had gone north in Operation Exodus and who having been trained as cadres in the arts of guerrilla war were sent south, most of them quite happily, to begin battle. They returned, as prudence would dictate, to their home province, whose geography they knew best and where awaited relatives and friends to support them. Since numerically most of the southern regroupees were from Binh Dinh, it was to Binh Dinh that most of them went, in all perhaps 25,000.

The result was that guerrilla war began earlier in Binh Dinh, more quickly became endemic there, and enjoyed far greater popular support, than in any other province. It became a truism, perhaps only slightly exaggerated, that in Binh Dinh if a person was not a Viet Cong, he was related to one.

Probably for this, as well as for geopolitical reasons, the Communist leadership early defined Binh Dinh as of major strategic importance. General Giap in his writings has noted at great length several times the importance of the area between the 14th and 15th parallel, which includes the northern half of Binh Dinh.

North Vietnamese mass media long have boasted of Communist military prowess in the province. *Nhan Dan*, the Party's official newspaper, has claimed Binh Dinh, "The first province in all of the South to completely annihilate an entire enemy regiment . . . Binh Dinh is the province with the highest record of enemy troops captured in a single battle."[8]

Because the province was strategically important to the Communists, it automatically became strategically important to the South Vietnamese Government (GVN) and the Allied forces fighting in Vietnam. Units of the First Cavalry Division, probably America's best military unit, was assigned to Binh Dinh, along with elements of the famed White Horse Division from South Korea, plus of course South Vietnamese troops, chiefly the ARVN 22nd Division. At one point in 1967, the force concentration had reached the level of one Allied soldier for every seven civilians in Binh Dinh.

Slowly under this weight of men and military pressure the Communist forces were crushed. By 1970 the military-pacification effort–as documents captured much later indicated–had largely emasculated vast elements of the internal Communist organization in the province.

The New Strategy

In the wake of the Allied force withdrawal, in 1970, the Party in Binh Dinh found itself organizationally near ruin. The leadership, although dismayed, remained resolute and ordered the start of the arduous task of rebuilding the Party.

The effort was enhanced with Hanoi's decision to permit abandonment of the regular force or big unit war strategy which it had pursued vigorously from 1956 until 1968. Hanoi authorized, or allowed, a return to protracted conflict, in the form of a new type of guerrilla war.

The Party in Binh Dinh welcomed the respite.

Analysis of district annual recapitulation reports - which are captured with greater frequency than the higher level reports–provide a clear and precise picture of conditions and activity at the district level. It is relatively easy to infer from them what were the instructions and hence the strategy, under which the district Party committee had been operating the previous year.

Binh Dinh 1972 district recapitulation reports indicate that in 1971 Party committees had been instructed to concentrate on these activities: building up the district level political base, overhauling and streamlining internal Party organizational machinery; retraining and reindoctrinating cadres both in ideological and administrative or managerial matters, increasing struggle movement activities in the villages; and important to note, engaging only in para-military activity which contributed directly to some local political gain. These instructions, which covered the year ending in April of 1972, are of course quite at variance with big unit war and in fact, are the antithesis of the kind of warfare launched by the North Vietnamese in 1972.

The heart of the Binh Dinh organizational change was the creation of still another cluster of village-level committees called People's Uprising Committees. One was to be organized in each hamlet in Binh Dinh, if possible. The committee, under the local Party unit's guidance, was charged with generating fervour by raising the revolutionary consciousness of the hamlet residents until it exploded in an uprising. Province level cadres went down to the district level to conduct classes in the techniques of mobilizing public support and to supply the local cadres with necessary agitation-propaganda materials. The formation of this People's Uprising Committee structure was both ambitious and expensive in terms of time and manpower.

Other elements of the Binh Dinh 1971-1972 activity plan included recruiting new Party members, impressment of corvee labour, and enlistment or impressment of para-military guerrillas. It involved reorganization and intensification of all Party propaganda and agitation work. The Provincial Party Central Committee's own agit-prop apparatus was overhauled. There was created as a minimum in each Communist controlled village, one five-man propaganda team, a three-man agitation team (to work in enemy territory) and a village cultural or entertainment team. In addition, each village committee was to install at least one agit-prop cadre to work full time in each of its hamlets.

The anatomy of the Communist movement in Binh

8 Nhan Dan, May 2, 1972

Dinh Province in the year preceeding the present military offensive is superbly indicated in the Phu My District Party Central Committee recapitulation report. It is dated April 19, 1972 and, ironically, was submitted at the moment when strategy decisions in Hanoi were being taken that would wipe out most of the previous year's effort.

Phu My, a key coastal district in northern Binh Dinh is the heartland of the Communist movement in the province, as Binh Dinh is the Communist heartland of South Vietnam.

The Phu My report contains a large number of statistics[9]. In early 1970, when the Party's committee received its annual instructions, the local loyal strength was thus:

The Party had a membership of 386, grouped into 50 basic units (or cells). The chief front organization, the Phu My Farmer's Liberation Association had 3,908 members in 251 chapters or units. The movement controlled or had "liberated" 28 hamlets (out of 90 in the district) with a population of about 25,000 (or one-fourth of the district's total). The district Para-Military or guerrilla force—consisting, as the force does elsewhere, of two elements: Regional or Territorial Guerrilla Units and Local Guerrilla Units—was numerically small and qualitatively poor. Under arms were four Regional Guerrilla companies (with respective strengths of 21, 22, 23, and 31 men) and a Central Committee Headquarters Guard (or Security) company of 55 men. The report does not indicate Local Guerrilla strength but does state that each hamlet had three to five local guerrillas; and elsewhere the report lists 38 hamlets, so presumably the district had between 144 and 190 local guerrillas. The cadre roster, for the entire apparatus in the district contains 320 names and that is probably the total number of full time Communist workers in the district, the others being engaged only part-time in Party activities.

In the subsequent year, 180 Party members were recruited, bringing the membership up to 566[10] and the number of basic units was increased by 19, to a total of 79[11] Recruitment/impressment effort yielded 516 young military draftees[12] the disposition of whom were: 70 of the most promising went to a cadre camp in Cambodia for leadership training; 100 were assigned to Regional Para-Military units bringing their total strength from 152 to 252; and 346 became local guerrillas adding to the Local Guerrilla Unit strength which the year previous had been somewhere between 144 and 190 persons.

Efforts by Party cadres also generated a good deal of corvee labour for the district, a total of 17,800 man days for the year, almost all of which went into transportation and cartage work.

It was a year of intensified political struggle activity and the report lists these results: indoctrination sessions conducted for 60,200 people; 471 struggle demonstrations staged in the liberated hamlets, attended by a total of 112,311 persons; 316 struggle movements (uprisings) staged by 16,711 persons in GVN-controlled villages; 2,080 GVN wall newspapers destroyed; 175 South Vietnamese flags torn down; 14,175 proselyting letters written (by villagers under Communist control, to family members and friends in the South Vietnamese Armed Forces); 1,200 claim letters on inadvertent war damage written to the South Vietnamese Government district office (and, the report adds, some VN$ 2,300,000 received in compensation); and 15,700 leaflets scattered, chiefly in Phu My City, the district capital. Also in Phu My, 100 wall slogans were posted; 20 National Liberation Front (NLF) flags raised; 200 covert meetings held with town dwellers; and 23 agents planted among the school and student groups.

Front organization cadres were given special training and dispatched to increase the ranks of the Student Liberation Association and the Youth Liberation Association. They were ordered to work chiefly in the schools in areas where the Vietnamese Government's control was weak and in the refugee and resettlement areas.

Proselyting campaigns were conducted against the South Vietnamese Army (ARVN) and militia forces in the area resulting, according to the report, in the desertion or defection of 100 soldiers and 50 militia members. Some 70 families were persuaded to return from relocation villages or refugee camps. Six hamlets were "liberated" bringing the total to 34 for the district.

It was not a year without local military activity, of course. The report lists these results in violence: 140 "enemies of the revolution" indoctrinated and released; 70 others "were suppressed" (meaning not clear); 564,750 punji-sticks driven; 185 mines and booby traps planted; and 12 bridges and six culverts destroyed. The report added that a total of 530 military actions of all types were conducted by the Para-Military forces during the year inflicting on the enemy, it claimed, 1,928 casualties.

All of the Binh Dinh District reports seem to take a generally self-satisfied tone. More than this, they suggest that the Binh Dinh pattern should serve as a model for the entire country. The grand design that seems to emerge from the scattered references in these reports is that the Party throughout South Vietnam should pursue a policy of placing maximum premium on first establishing a political base and then moving out from it into the major

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9 Which quite possibly are inflated for the benefit of higher headquarters and therefore to be regarded with caution; however even if the precise data are questionable they do accurately reflect thrust and nature of activity.

10 The report stated that during the year, 56 Party members were killed; 17 were arrested, eight were purged (with no further elaboration), seven moved out of the province and two died of illness.

11 In part, the increase was due to organizational change. The basic unit list was given as: hamlet units 52, NLF agency units 17, Para-military units eight, Phu My City one, and the resettlementment area one; for a total of 79. But the membership in the basic unit dropped from an average of eight persons per unit in 1971 to seven persons per unit in 1972.

12 All under 18. Instructions to cadres were not to recruit over this age.

political institutions of South Vietnam, seeking ultimately to control or at least influence them. This plan would require entrenchment in a secure political headquarters. Hence it is implied—and certainly the implication is correct—that if a political redoubt is to be created for the Party in South Vietnam, the place to build it is in Binh Dinh Province. In any event, the heart of the doctrinal summation in the reports is that in the admixture of armed struggle and political struggle, the latter definitely should take priority over the former.

The 1972 Summer-Fall Campaign

The Vietnam war abruptly changed its character in April, 1972, and nowhere was this change more significant than in Binh Dinh Province. For three years the local Party leadership had seen a steady diminution of military activity as strategy moved from big unit war back to protracted conflict. Then suddenly, North Vietnamese Defense Minister, General Vo Nguyen Giap—the master of surprise and deception—launched his 1972 Summer-Fall campaign, dispatching virtually all of his army's 14 combat divisions out of North Vietnam.

The dimension, scope and intention of the campaign now are fairly clear. It was to be high-technology warfare which would match, if possible, the firepower and weaponry of the enemy. Tanks, longranged artillery and anti-aircraft weapons were used in number and manner never seen in the past. Three sectors were opened—Northern, Central and Southern[13]—and this meant for the first time frontal warfare, the enemy on one side and the defenders on the other.

The Central Sector was axial, along Highway 19 which runs from Kontum, deep in the highlands, through Binh Dinh to the coast.

Kontum was invested and the long effort to capture it begun. In Binh Dinh, some 6,000 North Vietnamese troops drove on three of the province's nine district capitals. The linchpin in this operation was Hoai An City in Hoai An District which according to one captured document was described as "geographically the shield protecting all of the central area of Binh Dinh."

If Hoai An was the linchpin, Bong Son was the anchor of the axis. For General Giap, it was imperative to secure Kontum and Bong Son as firm end anchors.

The Binh Dinh operation was conceived as a joint effort of the North Vietnamese Army (PAVN), the Binh Dinh Party Unit and the Vietcong, but it developed that the burden was carried by PAVN. Given the direction the Binh Dinh Party had taken the previous year, it was understandably ill-prepared for a sudden order to return to big unit war. It was in no position to launch this type of warfare itself, nor could it do much to support the efforts of the invading North Vietnamese.

At first it appeared that the PAVN was equal to the military task. Its sweep into Binh Dinh Province as the campaign started was swift and well executed. Within a few weeks it had overrun at least a third of the province, capturing the three district capitals. Some 200,000 persons suddenly found themselves under North Vietnamese control, although despite the rapidity of the attack another 180,000 managed to flee ahead of the invaders.

However, control of people or occupation of vast areas of territory was not the prime PAVN objective. For a moment at least, action in Binh Dinh became old-fashioned positional warfare, the capture through firefights and maneouvre of key geographic positions.

The crucial Communist objective in Binh Dinh, as we have noted, was Bong Son. In General Giap's calculation, if Kontum could be taken and then Bong Son, a sector line would be established from the Cambodian border to the sea, bisecting Vietnam. It was classic positional warfare: sieges accompanied by fluid wedge driving to split enemy forces.

In a strategic sense, this Central Sector operation was perhaps more important than the Northern Sector operation which turned on the Quang Tri attack (and which received far greater world attention).

Bong Son was captured. For General Giap, that moment, in many ways, was the high water mark of his 1972 Communist Summer-Fall offensive. Kontum was under siege and would fall momentarily. Pleiku would be next. Six thousand North Vietnamese troops stood on the coast of Central Vietnam, more than a hundred miles below Da Nang and Hue. Highway One—the vital trans-Vietnam artery—had been cut. With the fall of Kontum, strategic Highway 19—chief route out of the highlands—would be under Communist control. South Vietnam would be cut in half. Such was the Giap plan for the Central Sector. It was sound, realistic, even brilliant.

But it was to fail. Kontum held, in the face of virtually all outside expert opinion that it neither could nor should be defended. Pleiku was never seriously threatened.

The failure at Kontum set off a chain reaction which doomed the Central Sector plan for Binh Dinh. If one end of the axis could not be established neither could the other. The Allied forces, augmented by South Vietnamese Rangers, began a counter-attack. Hoai An City, the Communist's "shield in Binh Dinh", was retaken July 28 and the other lost district towns recaptured a few days later.

Arrival of the Rangers had tipped the force ratio against the North Vietnamese and made it impossible for them to hold Bong Son and it fell. The failure at Kontum had made holding Bong Son meaningless in any event. And with the loss of Bong Son, General Giap was forced to abandon the Central Sector as a major theatre in his Summer-Fall offensive.

This was a decisive defeat for the North Vietnamese troops—perhaps not as clearly embarrassing as the failure at An Loc in the Southern Sector but strategically more

13 The three sectors were the Northern (Quang Tri-Thua Thien-Hue); the Central (Kontum-Pleiku to Binh Dinh coast) and the Southern (in northern Binh Long province).

important. It had been one which could be seen developing day by day, gradually and inexorably.

The PAVN failure, plus the slow pace at which the failure emerged, probably explains the hostility and subsequent recriminations between the North Vietnamese and local Binh Dinh Party members. In the minds of the North Vietnamese (also in the minds of the local loyal in Binh Dinh) there rose the question–to which we still have no definite answer–and that is: was the PAVN failure in Binh Dinh due to strategic miscalculation or because the Communist force employed was too small? And, if the force was too small, was this because the local Communists did not supply the manpower and assistance which the North Vietnamese invaders had expected? Probably the answer to both questions was affirmative for the North Vietnamese lost the battle of Binh Dinh.

The Bloodletting

The Summer-Fall campaign was accompanied by considerable Communist terrorism such as shelling of refugee columns, assassination and executions. Kangaroo courts handed down sentences of death or jungle jail terms to several thousand "lackeys, tyrants and traitors". But these acts of revenge or "revolutionary justice" are a more or less standard part of any Communist offensive. Once again, as at Hue in Tet 1968, came the cadres with clip boards, checking off names of persons earmarked for execution. This time there was not the wholesale butchery of the 1967 campaign as at Dak Son, for example, where Communists with flame throwers strode through the village of 2,000, incinerating every man, woman and child they could find.[14]

Puzzling is that the Binh Dinh pattern of killing was not duplicated in the other two sectors where the PAVN offensive penetrated. There was bloodletting elsewhere, particularly in Quang Tri, but it differed from Binh Dinh. Yet while the Binh Dinh differences were apparent–in intensity, ubiquity and duration–it is difficult to find a pattern in them. Below are typical examples of bloodletting in Binh Dinh, stripped of detail, which probably add up to some discernable pattern:

* In Hoai Xuan village, Hoai Nhon district, on May 18, a kangoroo court tried and found guilty 30 villagers, some of them local officials. One was shot on the spot and the others ordered taken to a nearby sandbar and shot.

* At the Thau Vuong Che tea plantation, near An Duc village in Hoai An district, on May 29, some 20 persons were tried and found guilty. Three were shot and the rest ordered to jungle indoctrination camps. About half were government officials.

* In Hoa Huong village, Hoai Nhon district, on May 19 and 20th, 12 local governmental officials were executed.

* In Vinh Phung hamlet, 42 policemen were reportedly executed in a mass ceremony; another was beheaded and his body was hung from a tree beside a police station.

* Near Bong Son village in Hoai Nhon district, in mid-May, 80 to 100 persons, only a few of them civil servants, were shot and buried.

* In An Phong village, Hoai An district, May 29, some 1,000 villagers were assembled to witness the trial of three local residents: the An Hao assistant village chief, a government pacification team leader and a local police chauffeur. All three were tried, found guilty and executed. One insisted, even at the moment of his death, that he was anti-government.

* Ho Nguu, elected hamlet chief of Tai Luong hamlet, Hoai Nhon district on May 25, although badly injured was taken before a kangoroo court with his assistant, Phan Duc. Both were found guilty. Ho Nguu was executed and Phan Duc ordered to a indoctrinational camp, reportedly was executed later.

* On May 18, 15 persons were taken from a jungle detention centre to Dinh Tri hamlet, Hoai Xuan district, and were tried; two were shot and the remainder told that they would receive indoctrination camp sentences; five of these however were later executed near the village and their bodies buried.

To date,[15] evidence has been uncovered to indicate that about 275 persons definitely were deliberately executed by the Communists in Binh Dinh. This is based on eye witness reports (Vietnamese Government penetration agents, refugees and village survivors). Third person and other secondary sources–which of course are less reliable –indicate that 260 more were executed. Firm reports also indicate that about 6,000 were taken back into the An Lao valley.

This rate is proportionately higher than elsewhere during the offensive. It is paradoxical or at least ironic that Binh Dinh which for so long was regarded as sympathetic to the Communist cause, should witness far more executions and incarcerations than did Quang Tri which because of the 1968 Tet massacres had become sullenly hostile to the North Vietnamese Communists.

14 In fact, assassinations had been decreasing. The yearly totals: 1969, 6,000; 1970, 6,000; 1971, 4,000; 1972 (to July 1), 2,700.

15 Not beyond the realm of possibility is recrimination in the opposite direction. Some of the unexplained secretly buried bodies may be Party outsiders killed by Party locals. Certainly local motivation was strong. They had seen their Party painfully arise from the ashes once again to become an effective political institution. Then came the North Vietnamese offensive, wrecking the cohesiveness. Then came the enemy's military response –air strikes and ground assaults. One B-52 raid, on June 16, scored a lucky hit on the PRP temporary headquarters destroying some of its installations and killing a number of headquarters personnel. It would be expected that a local Party member would tend to blame, in part at least, the death of a comrade in this raid on the North Vietnamese who had brought the whole business of war anew to his province. Proud, angry, vengeful as those in Binh Dinh often are, there may have been cases in which the local true believers turned on the North Vietnamese in their midst.

The victims of this campaign included Binh Dinh village and hamlet officials, local militia, police and *doan ket* or pacification workers. As noted above, this is to be expected. The Communists usually execute such "social categories" as they phrase it, whenever they have the opportunity.

Also falling victim–which, in the past elsewhere, sometimes has and sometimes has not been the pattern–were village influentials, such as teachers, doctors, nurses, religious figures and local politicians.

There is, in Binh Dinh, a third shadowy category, quite out of the norm: execution of persons with a past identification of sympathy for or even outright support of the local Communist movement. Of the several hundred persons executed and the several thousand incarcerated in An Lao valley camps, many–perhaps as many as one third–may be former Binh Dinh Party members or supporters.

The actual executions in Binh Dinh were of two types: public, with great fanfare and explanation; and secret, with no explanation at all. The public executions were if Communist public announcements are to be believed, elimination of local "tyrants". Probably in some of these cases, this label was cover for purging Party members. It is almost certain those executed secretly, without public explanation were people generally regarded as loyal. They were executed in private either because the Party had no solid, publicly acceptable case against them or because Party credibility would have suffered in an attempt to discredit them among local peoples who had known them long and well.

Some of those ostensibly loyal may have been found in the course of the turbulent events of the offensive, to be double agents. But the numbers executed are so large they could not all have been double agents and, even so there would seem to be no particular reason not to expose them publicly before execution.

Some probably were executed as deviationists, because they opposed or refused to support the doctrinal strategy of the North. Vietnamese. Others may have been purged because they proved to be inadequate to the needs of the Party at some critical moment during the campaign. Some of the executions had overtones of revenge although rather than personal vendettas, they more likely were the angry irrational reaction of political commissars and others lashing out in frustration at the local faithful around them.[15]

Lending credence to the thesis that many of the executions in Binh Dinh were Communists killing Communists, are the scattered reports which have emanated from the province for nearly two years concerning local rectification campaigns.

In December 1971, a Binh Dinh Party Provincial Central Committee order went out to begin a new campaign against "enemies of the Revolution". There was no particular distinction drawn in the order between enemies in the enemy camp and enemies in the Communist camp.

Each Communist controlled hamlet was to develop a special five-person security team (team chief, three agents and a liaison member who normally was a woman). These teams were to receive special province-level training in the art of surveillance. The next step after training was to make a census of all population centres in the district, listing roster-fashion, the names of "suspected enemies of the Revolution". The order instructed that particular attention be paid to those persons who had been closely associated in the past with religious or political (presumably non-Marxist) organizations. In all Communist controlled hamlets, a tight surveillance system was to be established, to watch and record the activities of all residents, without exception, listing their comings and goings, names of their visitors etc. It is apparent, that the order intends that most of the Security Agent's day be spent in surveillance work, watching everyone including the watchers.

Other reports throughout the first months of 1971 make guarded reference to purging Party members, as for example in the Phu My district recapitulation report dated April 17, 1972. It informed the province Central Committee that during the previous year a total of 2,223 persons living under the Communists had been tried and convicted (no verdicts of innocent, apparently) mostly on charges of "endangering the Revolution". Of these, 1,053 were sentenced to death or sent to reindoctrination camps (the report did not distinguish between sentences); the remaining 1,170 were put under "detention-re-education", which amounts to house arrest, constant surveillance and daily indoctrination sessions.

Phu My, it appears, underwent a purge. Probably it was chiefly to winnow out the weak and unreliable, but also probably had a doctrinal dispute as its base. The important thing to note is the remarkably high total figure: 2,223. The report elsewhere fixes the number of persons under Communist control in the district at about 25,000. Hence, we have the case of an area, not suddenly occupied by the Communists but long under their control, reporting that in one year it was found necessary to take drastic measures–death or incarceration–against nearly ten percent of the total population. Such a large number, under such circumstances, strongly suggests a purge, of what doctrinal base we can only surmise but probably one over means not ends.

The Conclusions

Let us summarize and restate the central facts which, emerge from our examination of Binh Dinh province.

First, historically there is in Binh Dinh more latent pro-Communist sentiment or at least receptivity to Communist activity than in any other province in Vietnam, one based on ties of the most durable type, kinship and blood relationships.

Second, the Party in Binh Dinh in the late 1960's, receiving extraordinary attention from the South Vienamese military and pacification campaigns, was left organizationally devastated. Luckily it got a respite which en-

abled its leaders to begin rebuilding Party structure. They devised a new operational doctrine which advocated achieving victory, not just in Binh Dinh but in all Vietnam, by means of what might be called armed-political struggle or politics with guns, rather than by regular force or big unit war strategy.

Third, the new approach by the Party in Binh Dinh, after months of effort, began to yield progress—not spectacular progress perhaps but sufficiently impressive to encourage the faithful, and to convince Party leaders that they had indeed found a formula for victory.

Fourth, then, without previous notice, the rug was pulled out from the Party in Binh Dinh. The Hanoi leadership launched a high-technology military campaign whose strategy was the very antithesis of that being pursued in Binh Dinh. It imperiously levied support requirements on the Binh Dinh Party which it could not possibly meet but which had the effect of wiping out much of the cohesion and organizational strength so carefully developed. Worse, the campaign failed, in a failure that has overtones of blunder.

Finally, and this is thesis more than dictum since much of the data remains obscure or unexplained, a great deal of internecine blood letting developed within the Binh Dinh Communist movement. It appears to stem from a doctrinal dispute over grand strategy and turns on a conflict of interest between the Party in Binh Dinh and the Party in Hanoi. It also has a more irrational dimension in assignment of blame for the failure of the 1972 Summer-Fall offensive in Binh Dinh province.

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At this writing, there are more questions than answers remaining about the situation in Binh Dinh Communist Party ranks. Perhaps, given the history of the province this shall always be the case.

If one assumes that the high-technology warfare which General Giap launched in April will ultimately be abandoned the question arises: what will General Giap do next? Will he accept the Binh Dinh doctrine which advocates building a secure political redoubt in South Vietnam and using it as a base to launch what essentially is a political attack on the institutions of South Vietnam? Or will he, after a period of recuperation, once more launch his armies in military attempt to seize South Vietnam? In either event, unfortunately the new chapter beginning in Binh Dinh will still be one largely written in blood. □

The Role of Medicine in Counter-Subversion and Counter-Insurgency

by Lt. Col. Ramon C. Cortes, Jr.

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IT is now widely accepted that social and economic development must go hand in hand with military suppression efforts against subversion and insurgency. One important aspect of socio-economic programmes directly related to counter-subversion and insurgency is in the field of medicine. Adequate medical care is one of the social services that governments everywhere are expected to provide to their constituents. People, regardless of their status in life, where they live or work, have come to regard the availability of medical facilities as a legitimate right. Ideological subversive groups are well aware of the people's sentiment and have successfully exploited this knowledge in their psychological operations to gain acceptance for themselves among village people and alienate the Government. Where governmental efforts in providing adequate health services have lagged, insurgents have exploited health problems to undermine the regime they seek to overthrow.

The contest for winning the acceptance and loyalties of the people is being keenly fought in the developing countries. Thailand and the Philippines, as they strive towards economic development and stability, are the two SEATO member countries gravely affected by this struggle against subversives and insurgents.

Medical assistance in developing countries like Thailand and the Philippines must be designed with both economic development and counter-insurgency and counter-subversion purposes in mind. If economic development is the main objective, the stress should be placed on *preventive* and *environmental* medicine, which raise living standards but may also require the villager to change long-standing habits. Family planning is an integral part of this aspect of public health. If medical aid is directed more towards winning the support of the people, the stress should be placed on *curative* medicine, which is designed to meet the immediate needs of the villagers. In the long run, however, environmental and preventive medical care provides the only effective means of removing the root causes of the villagers' complaints.

The Health Situation in Thailand and the Philippines

Rapid population growth in Thailand and the Philippines hinders the benefits derived from economic expansion and improved health schemes. In both Thailand and the Philippines, the natural increase of population has risen alarmingly to the rate of 3.2%. Both countries have populations of approximately 32 million but the Philippines with a much smaller land area, has an average density of population greater than that of South-East Asia as a whole. At the present rate of growth, by 1980, the Philippine population will be twice that of 1960, and by the year 2000, her population will be over four times that of 1960. As for Thailand, the natural increase rate in urban areas is 8% per year with a doubling time of nine years.

The need for effective family planning programmes is urgent. In Thailand, steps have been taken by the Ministry of Public Health to expand existing maternal and child health centre facilities for family planning instruction. In the Philippines, work has been undertaken by an active but unofficial family planning movement under the Family Planning Association of the Philippines (FPAP). Other agencies engaged in this movement are the Silliman University Medical Center, the National Council of Churches, World Neighbours Inc. and the Responsible Parenthood Movement.

The Delivery of Health Care to Rural Areas

Another problem faced by health officials in Thailand and the Philippines is the inadequate machinery needed for the delivery of health care to rural areas. Both countries are predominately rural and basically agricultural in economy— 85% to 90% of the Thai population live in rural areas whereas the percentage for the Philippines is 70% to 80%. Health and midwifery centres established by the Department of Health in both countries exist at town and village levels but hospital facilities can be found only in the provincial capitals. The basic health services available to the rural areas are, however, usually well-organized and include maternal and child health, communicable disease control, environmental sanitation, nutrition and industrial hygiene.

In addition to the normal health services available through the health centres of the Departments of Health, a number of special projects have been designed to deal

with specific medical problems, especially in areas vulnerable to insurgency.

In the Philippines, the Department of Health's principal channels for the delivery of rural health and medical care are the Puericulture centres, Rural Health Units and Emergency hospitals, established in strategic areas out of reach of the better equipped provincial hospitals. The Armed Forces of the Philippines provide additional help. Home Defence Centres, with headquarters in the four major Armed Forces–namely, the Army, Air Force, Navy and Police Constabulary–contribute to improving health and social conditions in rural areas. Their activities in civic action include the construction of roads and sanitary facilities, the digging of wells and the transportation of agricultural produce to towns. The medical services of the Philippines Armed Forces have also organized military medical and dental teams for assignments to remote areas where Department of Health authorities are unable to operate because of inaccessibility or lack of security.

In Thailand, almost all rural health activities are conducted through the Department of Health. Schemes and programmes are implemented by such agencies as the Mobile Medical Care Project, the Border Patrol Police, the People's Assistance Teams, the Royal Thai Army and the Mobile Development Units. Activities in rural health parallel those of the Philippines but greater emphasis is given to the development of sanitary conditions through the provision of education and instruction. In addition, due to the shortage of health personnel, the Thai Department of Health may also employ the services of the "granny midwife", the "traditional doctor" or the "local healer" These people are accepted and influential in the village and after government health training, they can perform government services to alleviate the health problems of their villages.

Medical Manpower

There are six medical schools in the Philippines producing 800 doctors per year. In Thailand, the four medical schools produce 250 doctors per year. The number of nurses graduating each year in both countries is also inadequate to the needs. Matters are further aggravated by the maldistribution of health personnel throughout both countries. In the case of Thailand, there are more health personnel based in Bangkok than in other parts of the country. The doctor/population ratio for Bangkok is 1:1000; for the provincial areas, it is 1:15,000; and for the more peripheral regions, 1:100,000. Most doctors in Thailand and the Philippines come from prestigious backgrounds; few come from small villages or farming families. Their medical studies are oriented toward curative rather than preventive medical skills and work in hygiene and public health is considered unappealing. They are therefore unadapted to rural living and would prefer to work in government hospitals located in urban areas.

Health Problems Exploitable by Insurgents

In general, insurgent activities which attempt to exploit health problems may be classified into two categories: The provision of direct medical care and psychological operations. The methods used by the insurgents vary according to the regions they operate. However their methods fall under three broad headings: (a) specific health disorders which are exploitable; (b) problems in the delivery of health service which are exploitable; (c) exploitable health problems beyond the scope of the village.

Specific Health Disorders which are Exploitable

Certain diseases, although found throughout the country, are particularly common in remote and underdeveloped areas. Thailand and the Philippines have almost similar disease patterns. The major health problems seen at peripheral health centres in the order of their frequency are:

(a) Gastro-intestinal diseases

(b) Communicable disease, especially Tuberculosis and upper Respiratory Infections

(c) Trauma (Accidents), poisoning and violence

(d) Malnutrition and Avitaminosis

(e) Malaria and fevers of unknown origin

(f) Intestinal parasitism

(g) Pyoderma and minor traumatic injuries

(h) Dental Problems

Certain disorders are hyperendemic in some locations but relatively infrequent in others. For example, in Northeast Thailand, liver flukes are highly prevalent but can be prevented by medical education (i.e., by avoiding raw fish). Goitres are also common in the North and North-east of Thailand and insurgents have been known to capitalize on this situation by distributing iodized salt to the village folk.

The provision of basic medical care is a clever tool the insurgents use to win the loyalties of villagers in remote areas. Usually, the insurgents gather the villagers in a certain village together for propaganda sessions directed against the government and aspects of government programmes concerning the people. At the end of the session, they will provide various items such as:

(a) First-aid kits for snake bites

(b) Herbs for malaria, dysentery and typhoid

(c) Intravenous infusion sets for infectious fevers

(d) Drug administration against malaria

(e) Sulfa & penicillin drugs

(f) Food (rice, salt, vitamins)

(g) Medical indoctrination with particular emphasis on sanitation and prevention of diseases.

These offerings of the insurgents produce a significant psychological impact on the people.

Problems in the Delivery of Health Services which are Exploitable

Insurgent methods vary depending on the nature of a specific area, the ethnic structure and character of the inhabitants, the degree of security prevailing and the adequacy of government medical civic action programmes being carried out. All possible means are used by insurgents to denigrate the government and provide practical demonstration that they are the true saviours of the people. The most favourable conditions for the prosecution of the insurgent aim are lack of security and lack of continued, effective and dedicated government presence on the ground. Propaganda points out that the government provides only "short-term" assistance and then abandons the villagers. Government programmes are often used as themes in adverse propaganda dissemination. The continuing propaganda efforts made by the insurgents against government health activities are disseminated to the people both by personal contact and radio transmission. Among the problems exploited are: the lack of government health services, the inadequate delivery system, the misbehaviour of government officials and the villagers' beliefs and superstition.

The lack of government health services in many remote areas is often exploited by insurgents who claim that the government is not interested in the rural people or in minority groups. Although the government has recently redoubled its efforts in providing medical care to the rural areas, certain factors may operate resulting in the maldistribution of health services. For example, health workers who are motivated primarily by financial gain or personal comfort, would be less inclined to work in adverse geographic areas.

The poor terrain, lack of roads and climatic conditions in certain areas present obstacles to an adequate delivery system. The inability of the government to transport a sick person from an area distant from the established health service is quickly exploited. The theme again is government inability or indifference in taking care of its own people.

The status and behaviour of government officials often hinders close personal contact with the villagers. As in all fields of administration, civic action personnel are usually regarded as government representatives enjoying a position and income greater than the remote villager. Misconduct of any sort, indifference to duty, insensitivity to local customs and arrogant behaviour are all prime sources of insurgent propaganda and contribute to reducing the effectiveness of the medical teams due to the mistrust of the villagers.

Insurgents have often falsely claimed credit for medical services that have in fact been made available by the government. One method used is to claim that the health worker came only at the insistence of the insurgent. Another method is to follow behind the government unit and upon its departure, convene a gathering of the villagers and explain the services rendered were provided by the insurgent forces. Depending upon the degree of insurgent control, they may, in some situations, even intimidate the villager from attending government-sponsored health programmes. Insurgents in Thailand have been known to hinder the government's efforts in family planning by representing it as a government scheme to eliminate minority groups.

The villagers' superstition, customs and beliefs may obstruct effective medical care. Often the practices of Western medicine conflict with the attitudes of people in remote areas and ramifications have arisen from insurgent exploitation. As a rule, people in remote areas have a tendency to distrust doctors trained in Western medicine. They regard them as coming only to make money and having no sincere feeling for the people. Thus the doctors are looked upon with suspicion and their motives are questioned. An example of this occurred when a hill tribe patient, a child, was taken to a government hospital and subsequently died. Word was spread that the child was killed either on purpose or through negligence. Because these people usually have a strong desire to die in their own villages, further attempts at evacuating patients to adequate medical facilities are often fruitless. Terminal cases seen by government health authorities may also be exploited by insurgents as evidence of government medical incompetence.

In certain rural areas where anti-malarial spraying operations have been conducted, local superstition has been fostered by the insurgents that the white spray makes children sick or that villagers will be rendered impotent.

In some cases, rural people are hesitant or absolutely refuse to have venous blood specimens drawn. Insurgents will then spread rumours that their blood specimens will be administered to foreigners or even to animals. This propaganda is quite effective and often precludes epidemiologic and diagnostic studies.

Exploitable Conditions Beyond the Village

There are conditions that may occur at administrative levels above the village which the insurgent will seek to exploit. These are listed as follows:

(1) The total economic services may be inadequate and hence limit the delivery to all areas. National agencies therefore, through default, leave the field to the insurgents.

(2) Agencies over-burdened with bureaucratic workloads resulting in unnecessary red tape find difficulty in achieving timely delivery. By the time a request has gone through many channels, the approval of the allocation may be too late for effective medical implementation. This can result in promises made but not being fulfilled. The insurgents can easily exploit this situation by claiming that all the government has been doing is paying lip service to the villagers.

(3) Lack of coordination between different rural agencies operating in the same locality resulting in con-

fusion among the rural people who may be totally unaware as to how, when and where to obtain medical aid from a given agency. Such simple matters of poor coordination can be used by the insurgents to damage the government image.

Summarily, the efforts of insurgents are concentrated on problems which are the most prevalent and which can be corrected by their own resources. In the provision of direct medical care, their efforts are designed to achieve a rapid, clinically apparent effect which produces a significant psychological impact on the populace. Because of the geographic isolation and limited material resources of the insurgents, most of their projects dealing with basic medical care are short-term in duration. Insurgents usually rely more on the principles of psychological warfare in exploiting existing health reliability is obviously seen in the case of the Philippines where because of the great distance from a parent Communist nation, insurgents in this country, in contrast to those in Thailand, are forced to rely considerably more on psychological operations than on the provision of direct medical care.

Situations which are exploitable by the insurgents can be found both in the prevalent community health disorders and in the health delivery system. The lack of an effective government delivery service further compounds disaffection and unrest among the villagers who may have already benefitted from the insurgents' provision of basic direct medical care.

Medical Aspects of Counter-Insurgency

The Philippine and Thai Governments are rapidly becoming aware of the existing problems in health delivery and the prevailing health disorders which are exploitable by insurgent elements. This task of delivering health care throughout rural communities is an enormous one for any developing country and especially so for one aggravated by internal struggle and limited resources. However, these governments, in attempt to overcome the shortage of medical facilities, personnel and finances, are emphasizing the development of an efficient communications network to ensure more effective administration of the available resources. The term "communications network" in this context refers not only to such factors as access roads, transport, telephone and radio links, but also to the communication on a more personal basis between the different units involved in rural health care and more important, the communication between the health workers themselves and their patients at the village level. As stated earlier the attitude and behaviour of health officials contribute to the success or failure of medical service activities. Misconduct, indifference or arrogance to local customs and traditions are all primary sources of insurgent propaganda.

Equally important in preventing insurgent exploitation of medicine is the government's provision of *continued* health services to security sensitive areas. Sporadic delivery will achieve no lasting loyalties. In regions where continued delivery is impossible, the presence of a well-trained and well-motivated government official, such as the barrio captain in the Philippines, will provide an invaluable continuity of contact between rural health teams and the villagers.

Promises of government health services to villagers must be fulfilled. Failure to provide these services can only result in an exploitable situation leading to distrust and unrest. Medical services to the villages should never be withheld due to inability to pay a fee. The requirement for fees in security sensitive areas can easily be exploited by insurgents who may administer free medical care.

In order to decentralize doctors and nurses from urban areas, both governments have begun to offer various incentives such as free housing, increased salaries and adequate fringe benefits to doctors and nurses serving in remote and underdeveloped areas. The attitude and well-being of the physicians employed in the health centres of Thailand and in the Rural Health units in the Philippines have bearing on the outcome of the various health programmes assigned to help in countering subversion and insurgency in these countries.

With the shortage of doctors, nurses and sanitarians in rural areas, help must be obtained from the villagers themselves. The governments are now considering the concept of the "village helper", an individual who is willing to co-operate with the government health officials in the provision of medical care and prevention of disease. Such personnel as the village headman, granny midwife, local healer, priest, teacher and others, should be given basic medical training and allowed to serve as "helper" to government health workers.

The rural health team itself should be an object of constant improvement. Dynamic and capable leadership should be developed to effectively direct health care activities. Each team ought to possess adequate background knowledge of the local area and environmental projects must be adequately explained to the villagers in order to avoid any likelihood of conflict with local customs, beliefs and traditions. In this way, the basis for insurgent inspired false rumours could be dispelled or minimized.

Finally, all health personnel dealing with insurgency problems and deployed in areas where insurgents are known to operate, should be knowledgeable in the principles of psychological operations against subversion and insurgency, particularly the medical and psychological aspects.

Only through the efforts of these individuals, in their management of medical insurgency problems, government activities and operations can have a profound impact on the populace and evolve into sound counter-insurgency programmes that truly reflect the government's genuine and sincere concern for those living in security sensitive areas. □

Civic Action: The Philippine Experience

by Colonel Angel M. Navarro

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SHORTLY after World War II, the life of the young Philippine Republic was threatened by a Communist-led armed uprising. The Communist Party of the Philippines (PKP), failing in its initial bid to gain power through "parliamentary processes", decided to resort to armed struggle in attaining its objectives. For this purpose, it re-activated its military adjunct known during the period of Japanese occupation as the National Anti-Japanese Army, otherwise called in the dialect as "Hukbo Ng Bayan Laban Sa Hapon" (Huks). Scattered harrassing forays developed within a brief period into bold attacks on Government installations and urban centres north and south of Manila.

In the face of the serious threat posed by the Huks to Philippine security, the Government immediately undertook several steps to contain the rebellion. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) was reorganized to meet the threat. As part of the reorganizational effort, self-contained battalion combat teams were formed. These teams, composed of efficient and well-trained fighting units from the armed forces, complete with psychological warfare specialists, were deployed in the more sensitive areas. Intensified intelligence efforts led to the arrest of the Communist "Politburo" in October 1950, thus destroying the nerve centre of the Communist movement. By this time, better trained and equipped army units were killing and capturing Huks in great numbers. Scout rangers extended the reach of the Government drive through special operations into areas not normally reached by ordinary troops. The AFP, as a whole, learned to match unconvential Huk tactics with equally unorthodox counter-insurgency methods.

The moving spirit behind this dynamic Government drive was the former Defence Secretary Ramon Magsaysay. Although not a professional soldier, he combined his experience as a guerrilla leader during the Japanese occupation with his concern for the common man. He discerned, early in the campaign, that the cry for "Land for the landless" and "Social justice for the masses", although raised by outlaws, had a genuine ring. He concluded that immediate and sincere Government attention to these problems, not mere armed suppression, was the rightful answer. Magsaysay then announced his dual programme of "all-out force and all-out friendship". This meant relentless military operations against those who challenged the authority of the Government, and, a helping hand to those who would co-operate with it.

The wisdom of the Magsaysay policy lay in its recognition that depressed conditions in rural areas were being exploited by the Communists to promote their cause. An agrarian system, evolved under Spanish colonization and perpetuated under American rule, reduced the status of small tenant-farmers to a life of virtual serfdom. Landlords and middlemen kept the farmers in constant debt by advancing loans to them during the lean months and collecting in kind at harvest time. Usurious interests added to the loan capital, gave the lenders the major share of the harvest and left the farmer with little to support his family until the next harvest. In order to survive he had to continue borrowing. This vicious cycle, repeated year after year, drove the farmer and his family inextricably deeper and deeper into debt and kept him from even hoping for a better life.

Poverty generated other problems. Poorly fed, clothed, and sheltered, the farmer and his family easily succumbed to disease. His children dropped out of school at an early age and as adults, they were no better prepared than their forebears to face the responsibilities of life. The result was that the farmer developed an attitude of indifference, which, when provoked, could change to one of hostility towards the Government.

The Government programme gave primary attention to the needs of the farmers in insurgency-affected areas. However, since conditions were insecure, and civilian agencies inadequate, Magsaysay had to utilize the Armed Forces to cope with the most pressing problems. This campaign registered a number of "firsts" for the Filipino soldier. For the first time, as the trained defender of a sovereign republic, he found himself pitted against his own countrymen in internal armed conflict. Also, for the first time, he was called upon to undertake non-military activities to restore stability within his own country.

Civil Affairs offices were created within the framework of the APF. With the help of local leaders, their field teams enlisted the co-operation of the public for the Government's campaign and studied the needs of the people living in the villages or "barrios". Military medical teams

were widely deployed to render medical and health services in barrios which were not reached by civil rural health units. The army assisted in digging deep tube-wells, to provide safe drinking water, the lack of which was a major cause of the high incidence of gastro-intestinal diseases. This activity expanded into a nation-wide campaign called the "liberty-well" programme for all barrios.

Army engineers, backed up by 21-year old military trainees, constructed feeder roads to inaccessible barrios. These roads, aside from increasing the mobility of operational forces, strengthened communications between the Government and the people. The military cleared abandoned farming areas and resettled families which were disturbed by military operations in the new sites. They repaired irrigation systems to bring much-needed water to the rice fields. They erected buildings to provide more classrooms for over-crowded schools. The Economic Development Corps, which became popularly known as EDCOR, carved resettlements from the wilderness to receive captured and surrendered Huks. The settlers were given initial support and protection until they could take care of themselves. These measures of resettlement, free Government legal service for farmers, and new farmers' welfare laws, were providing land for the landless and extending justice to those socially and economically deprived. Magsaysay aptly observed that: "Those who have less in life must have more in law."

These activities demonstrated convincingly the Government's concern for the welfare of the people. Thus, the people rallied warmly and spontaneously to the Government's side in the conflict. Popular co-operation and support for the administration eventually resulted in the downfall of the Huks. For Magsaysay, the people's faith in his humanized approach was confirmed by his election in 1950 to the highest executive post—the Philippine Presidency.

The return to normalcy created a favourable condition for establishing pilot socio-economic measures on a permanent basis. It was realized that the temporary, stop-gap projects undertaken at the height of the emergency could not be sustained unless fundamental changes were made in the Government structure and in the agrarian and social systems. Additional laws were passed to guarantee that the farmer received a fair share of his harvest. The judicial system gave special attention to agrarian cases. By executive decree, the Presidential Arm on Community Development (PACD) was established for the purpose of encouraging the participation of local governments. Agricultural and credit extension systems were formed. A civil agency was organized to take charge of resettlements. Factories for producing pre-fabricated school buildings were set up and operated by army engineers. A Presidential Second Building Committee administered the distribution and construction of these school houses. Additional resources were channelled to health and agricultural services.

In the middle 1960s, while the Government was undertaking the implementation of a new land reform programme, there occurred a resurgence of Huk activities. The remnants of the old movement, re-organized and revitalized with new blood, resumed insurgent activities in Central Luzon. The Government found itself faced with the enormous task of implementing a controversial land reform programme amidst turbulence in the countryside.

Under the land reform programme, the farmer, after generations of complete economic dependence upon a landlord, was now promised emancipation with the responsibilities of independent land ownership placed squarely on his shoulders. Under this scheme, he must own his own carabao (buffalo). He had to buy his own seeds. He would have to pay for additional labour at planting and harvest time and find means to provide for his daily subsistence while awaiting the new crop. This was not to count the numerous requirements for shelter, clothing, health and the education of his children. Under the old order, these were all provided by the landlord. Oppressive as the lending conditions were, they insured the farmer survival through floods, typhoons, droughts and pests. Now, in one single stroke of nature's distemper, he could lose his source of livelihood for an entire year. With no savings to absorb the shock from such a loss, he would be entirely helpless if he had no recourse to credit. The possible risks involved, coupled with the farmer's attitude of psychological resistance to change evolved from prolonged hardship and frustration, made it difficult for him to accept the Government's programme.

Thus, the Government had to mobilize all of its resources, including the Armed Forces to gain public acceptance for land reform. One of the first measures undertaken by the Government was to hold week-long seminars for farmer leaders from pilot land reform areas. These were held at army installations which were transformed into schools and named Civic Action Centres (CACs). Military and civil officials joined hands to bring barrio captains, councilors, and other traditional rural leaders to the CACs in order to explain to them the philosophy and mechanics of land reform. The participants slept in army barracks and ate in army mess halls. They rubbed elbows with their mentors outside of the classroom. Informal discussions on rural problems occupied their leisure hours. The friendliness and sincerity reflected in the faces and in the behaviour of Government representatives broke down the reserve of the rural leaders. Before long their suspicion of Government motives yielded to better understanding. They confided their feelings and gave a true insight into the actual conditions in the barrios. The most daring even praised openly the Government programme and denounced Huk depredations.

The last day of the seminar was devoted to a practical exercise on planning barrio development. New solutions to old problems were revealed to barrio leaders during the seminar discussions and they began planning projects for their own communities with much enthusiasm. Before leaving the CACs, they submitted proposals for self-help projects to the seminar officials. The seminar staff then, in the capacity of extensionists, were able to follow up

the training course by extending assistance to proposed community projects. They realized that seminars were but the first step in practical training for barrio development. Actual fulfilment lay in the accomplishment of these projects.

Certificates were awarded to participants at the end of the seminars. This gesture had much psychological impact upon rural leaders, many of whom had never received such documented recognition during their earlier schooling. Today, such certificates are found prominently displayed in rural homes as if they were diplomas for academic degrees.

Lessons were learned by both officials and participants during these seminars. Heart-to-heart talks with rural leaders enriched the officials' knowledge of the situation in the countryside. More important perhaps, these seminars gave the Government deeper insight into the mystery of the people's indifference towards change. The new knowledge served as a valuable aid in development planning and research. The seminars became channels of expression for the participants. They felt that the Government was physically in their midst and sympathetic to their grievances. Upon their return to their barrios, the newly trained leaders presented the villagers with their development plans prepared during the seminar.

As Government officials went into the field and saw the conditions at first-hand, they helped the people determine which projects should be considered as priorities. To their dismay, extension workers discovered that many of the projects undertaken during the first emergency had deteriorated. Barrio wells were dry. Roads were full of potholes and many could no longer be used. Irrigation systems were not functioning. The neglect was invariably blamed on lack of Government funds. Although this was an admitted shortcoming, maintenance could have been kept up if the communities directly benefitting from the projects had felt enough concern.

From their observations, seminar officials, who by then had organized themselves into Civic Action Committees, were firmly convinced that the people's attitude must be changed from one of indifference to one of concern, from one of continued dependence on the central Government to one of self-reliance. A new dimension was added to civic action.

The officials expressed the Government's desire to promote the people's welfare, but explained that the Government in turn needed the people's support to carry out such programmes. Normally this support was provided in the form of taxes. However, in a developing country like the Philippines, most of the people were too poor to pay taxes and the Government did not receive enough funds to provide for all of its people's needs. The solution, the officials pointed out, was that the people and the Government should work together on an aided self-help basis, to carry out the important projects. The people could contribute what they had, be it labour, materials or money. The Government would provide technicians, equipment and some financial assistance. It was emphasized that these projects would be forwarded by the people themselves. The Government was merely helping them to carry out their plans.

Civic Action Committees adopted certain rules in furtherance of the self-help principle:

(1) The request for assistance to a project must originate from the community.

(2) Undertaking projects must not prejudice the basic security mission of the assisting military unit unless it involved an emergency or national disaster.

(3) The project to be undertaken –

(a) had to be planned with the people and coordinated by the appropriate civil agencies.

(b) Would be maintained by the community.

(c) Would come under the administration of the appropriate civil authority.

(d) Would develop the resourcefulness and the capability of the community.

(e) Would draw community participation equal to or higher than that of the Government.

(f) Would be of recognizeable benefit to the community.

These dealings with the Civic Action Committees made new impressions on the people. Here was the Government frankly admitting its shortcomings instead of trying to hide them, or making hasty promises which could not be fulfilled. The people began to realize that while the Government existed for them, it would not be able to exist without them. They became aware of their obligations and saw that their participation in projects was an exercise of these obligations. Having dedicated their own time, effort, materials and even funds, they developed a sense of proprietory towards these projects.

How encouraging it was to see the community turning out to work on a road, a bridge or a dam. In the past, they had regarded this work as the responsibility of Government, and in the more distant past, the work would have been forced upon them by the church or colonial masters under pain of imprisonment or death. Now they were working voluntarily with inner understanding and a sense of obligation, rather than under compulsion.

There is nothing more instructive than success itself. As more and more projects were completed under these arrangements, Government agencies became inundated with requests for Government assistance to community self-help projects. The spirit of self-reliance had been planted. The problem of convincing people to work for themselves was replaced by the problem of providing adequate Government assistance to community projects.

Impressed by the AFP's effective handling of the land

reform programme, President Ferdinand Marcos recognized its potential in socio-economic development. In his first State-of-the-Nation address, he proposed to "mobilize the manpower, material and equipment resources of the Armed Forces to assist in the execution of our social and economic programme". The National Economic Council, the highest economic body at the time, supported the President's position and noted that such AFP participation was necessary to supplement the available civilian resources. The President, in approving AFP participation in the 4-year development programme, reiterated that the AFP must participate not only in preparing for the military defence of the country but also "in the more immediate and vital defence of the nation against poverty, ignorance, disease and injustice".

Upon the President's approval of AFP participation in development work, the military's civic action programme progressed from short-duration, high-impact community projects to long-range development. The increase of Civic Action Centres, supported by medical teams, enabled the AFP to expand its participation in rural community development. In addition, the AFP participated in national public works, manpower development, land development, and economic and industrial site planning.

One of the first public works projects undertaken by the AFP under this programme was the construction of the Manila North Diversion Road. The significance of this project is underscored by the fact that this road leads from Manila to a town in Bulacan Province in Central Luzon, the hotbed of Communist insurgency in the Philippines.

Another public works project assigned to the Armed Forces was the dredging of river estuaries along Manila Bay. Their job was to clean clogged river mouths, render them navigable, and facilitate the flow of water in order to reduce the incidence of floods in the lower parts of Central Luzon. Apart from these projects, the Army Engineers also helped in the construction of a considerable number of bridges, airports and school houses.

On its part, the Air Force conducted photogrammetic surveys in support of the Land Reform Programme.

AFP support to socio-economic development is now formally part of its Home Defence Programme, the objectives of which are:

(1) The development of a citizenry responsive to the civil and military obligations of the nation;

(2) The attainment of a state of military preparedness to cope with internal and external threats;

(3) The promotion of the AFP image as a partner and protector of the people; and

(4) The strengthening of the social, economic and political structure to enhance its national security posture.

The Home Defence Programme has undertaken four inter-related activities, namely, reserve affairs and manpower development, community relations, civil assistance and agro-military activities.

The emphasis on citizenship and vocational training in the build-up of the AFP reserve force begins with a progressive character formation and skills development programme for youth in secondary schools. A continuation of this training occurs when the youths undertake the prescribed military reservist training upon reaching the age of 21 or when they join the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) in college. It finally ends with instruction on community development and local government as the youths undergo annual active duty training as military reservists at Provincial Home Defence Centres.

The major services of the AFP have inaugurated what they call "Sunday Soldier Meetings" at Home Defence Centres. Although these meetings are aimed primarily at updating military proficiency among the reservists, they also provide an occasion to foster closer understanding between the regular soldiers and the civilian reservists. In the ensuing exchange of ideas, the military regulars might benefit from the technical and managerial talents of participating business and industrial executives and technicians, while the civilian reservists learn from the AFP the necessary knowledge, skill and spirit essential for socio-economic development. More importantly, the civilians are made more aware of the country's security needs.

The military's efforts in the field of social-economic development have in turn spurred active participation from the private sector. For instance, the Social Action Programme of the Church has taken special interest in the land reform programme of the Government. Also, a grouping of several large industrial co-operations, implementing a Social Progress Programme, has pledged to appropriate a portion of its annual earnings to projects for the advancement of the common man.

The spirit of popular involvement has spread even into the insurgency-affected areas in Central Luzon. Tired of paying wasted tribute to a so-called "Huk Invisible Government", the barrio people in some Central Luzon provinces had volunteered to provide armed defence for their own communities. This has led to the establishment of Barrio Self-Defence Units (BSDUs) which are contributing effectively to the Government's counter-insurgency campaign.

We have seen that Civic Action in the Philippines with the active support of the military, has achieved certain tangible results in the field of socio-economic development. Progress towards this end has eliminated some of the people's grievances and inequities exploited by the Communists in their campaign against the Government. The Philippine experience has demonstrated that the use of armed suppression alone is inadequate in coping with Communist insurgency and subversion. The people's participation is vital. It is essential for the people to recognize their important role and participate in furthering their own development. □

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